



# **ISLAMIZATION OF THOUGHT AND SOCIETY - A CRITIQUE OF SAYYID QUTUB**

**ABSTRACT  
THESIS**

**SUBMITTED FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF**

**Doctor of Philosophy**

**IN**

**ISLAMIC STUDIES**

**BY**

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## Abstract

The earliest period of Islāmic history saw Islām penetrate into and reign supreme in all walks of the lives of the Arabs who happened to be its first recipients. It continued to embody in them in its purest form for about half a century till the demise of the pious Caliphate (*khulaf-e-Rashidūn*) in 650AD. The transformation of Caliphate into Kingship at the hands of Ummayyids was a blow to Islām. In the subsequent ages it witnessed recurrent backlashes, none lesser intricate than the previous one. However, history bears testimony to the fact that whenever the declining motion of Islām aggravated, thinkers and reformers appeared and with their painstaking efforts and insightful suggestions they guided the Muslim *Ummah* to redirect this declining motion of Islām towards its original purity.

An intensive study of the history of Muslim revivalist or reformist movements reveals that these thinkers differed in the means and ways they suggested for bringing about the change, the variation being entailed by the different conditions and situations they lived in, and responded to. This variation in the methods and means to be adopted for bringing about Islāmization is more noticeable in the movements that appeared after World War I, especially after the abolition of the temporal institution of Caliphate in 1924 at the hands of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. This was a period when the Muslim world came under a heavy influence of the heathen, secular ideals propagated vigorously by the West, which unfortunately colonized a great part of the Muslim world.

One such method which reflects the concern of the Muslim thinkers and reformers about the catastrophic influence of western secular ideals over the Muslim *Ummah* was the one that took the shape of a full-fledged movement in the 1970s under the aegis of Ismail Raji al-Fanqi, namely the Islāmization of knowledge movement.

Islāmization of knowledge was originally suggested by Sayyid Abul Ala Mawdudi in the 1930s and by Sayed Naquib al-Attas in the 1970s. It was

however, al-Faruqi who in co-operation with his colleagues transformed it into a full-fledged movement.

This movement was based on the premise that the main problem with the Muslim *Ummah* of today was with their thought. The ‘thought of *Ummah*’ according to the advocates of Islāmization of knowledge movement had suffered a crisis owing to the religious-secular dualism existing in the educational system of the Muslim world. Al-Faruqi, the main architect of Islāmization of knowledge movement explicitly argued that there can be no doubt that the main locus and the core of “*Ummah*’s malaise” is the prevalent educational system. It is the breeding ground of the disease. It is in the schools and the colleges that self-estrangement from Islām and from its legacy and style are generated and perpetuated. The educational system is the laboratory where Muslim Youth are kneaded and cut, where their consciousness is moulded into a caricature of the West. However, al-Faruqi, believed that the *Ummah* will be able to rewrite its glorious chapters in the history, once this educational system is revamped and the gulf between religious-secular knowledge is bridged. This, he suggested can be done through Islāmization of knowledge which involved the recasting of the modern western knowledge in accordance with the teachings of Qur’ān and *sunnah* on the one hand while on the other hand, it emphasized on the renewal and updating of the traditional Islāmic legacy to make it more appealing and cater to the more complex problems of today’s world.

The main branches of knowledge, which al-Faruqi and his supporters identified for Islāmization, pertained to the disciplines of humanities and social sciences. The abstract sciences, owing to their value neutral character need not be taken so seriously in their view. But the disciplines of humanities and social sciences being value laden and dealing with the regulation of human life needed to be given priority for their Islāmization. Consequently, a number of works relating to Islāmic economics, Islāmic psychology.....have come down to us, indicating the urgency which the advocates this movement attached to the Islāmization of these disciplines.

An important issue with which these thinkers were confronted was the issue of methodology. The process of Islāmization of knowledge, I.e. critical evaluation of knowledge both modern western and traditional Islāmic, naturally led them to search for a new methodology. In their endeavor to develop a framework for the process of Islāmization, these thinkers identified inadequacies and pitfalls in both the traditional Islāmic methodology as well as in the dominant western methodology.

The inadequacy of the traditional methodology revealed itself in two diametrically opposed tendencies according to al-Faruqi (i) the tendency to restrict the field of *ijtihād* to legal reasoning, subsuming all modern problems under legal categories, thereby reducing the *Mujtahid* to a *Faqih* and (ii) the tendency to eliminate all criteria based on reason by adopting a “purely intuitive and esoteric methodology”. On the other hand the problem with the western methodology is its exclusive reliance on reason and the complete rejection of revelation as the source of knowledge. The new methodology which al-Faruqi and his supporters sought to devise was to avoid the pitfalls of both these methodologies. It was to be chalked out in a manner as to pave the way for (i) the redefinition of the scope of *ijtihād* to establish its relevance and use in all spheres of life including social, economic, political and cultural, (ii) classification of the role of the *Faqih* and (iii) rectification of the relation between reason and revelation.

Despite dominating the discourse on Islām for nearly two decades, the movement of Islāmization of knowledge could not yield the results which al-Faruqi and others had hoped at the time they initiated it. This may be attributed to the apparently elitist character of this movement, its appeal being largely limited to only the intellectual section of the *Ummah*.

On the other hand Sayyid Qutb’s views regarding the method for bringing about Islāmization have remained appealing to a great majority of the *Ummah*. Qutb’s views on Islāmization, however, must be seen within the paradigm of his understanding of Islām. To him Islām was a total and complete system and way of life. It did not require any “spare parts” from outside or any



change for completion. Man is incapable of adding anything to it or making any correction in it. It is so comprehensive, interdependent and interwoven that it covers all aspects of human life and the various genuine needs of man as well as of his different activities. With such an understanding of Islām, it is not surprising to see Qutb express a kind of detest and fear regarding the pursuit of the modern disciplines of humanities and social sciences. These disciplines pertain to the regulation and development of human life and as such propound models for human life. But what makes them unfit in life of a Muslim is their neglect of any Divine source of knowledge. Qutb stresses it quite forcefully that the basic planning of life must be left to that absolute and complete science which is entirely void of any ignorance. To him the *Shariah* is so all encompassing that it should govern personal criminal, civil and commercial activity.

After an in depth study and analysis of the views and ideas of various prominent thinkers of the field of social sciences, Qutb highlighted the many lacunae of these sciences, as challenging the divinity of Allah by not only suggesting life models but also by projecting a negative and an abstract notion of God. He, particularly gives a detailed description of the gods as conceived by various philosophers including Plato, Aristotle etc. Their gods are found to be abstract ones by Qutb with no will power and knowledge. Qutb also argues that the humanities and social sciences attack the humanity of man by redefining him in terms of mere matter. By redefining man, these disciplines blurred the distinguishing character of human being (from other animals) by reducing him to a creation that is no longer an agent in possession of a will ad capable of acting and believing, but mere matter, outside the process of making history and completely subservient to its allegedly irresistible forces and patterns. The most manifest consequences of such a redefinition of man, in Qutb's view is the inhumanity perpetrated against man in the name of some man-made ideology or another. Communism is quite often pointed out by him as a man-made system or ideology that does great harm to the dignity of man.

He also sees Marxism reducing man to a mere matter, Darwinism reducing him to mere animal and Freudism reducing him to a mere sexual being.

In contrast to humanities and social sciences, the pure sciences are seen by Qutb as originally Islāmic and facilitating mankind in the achievement of their goals as the vicegerents of God. In fact Qutb does not believe in merely Islāmizing the humanities and social sciences for bringing about an overall Islāmization. On the contrary, he believes in the intrinsic capacity of the *Shariah* to cater to all the needs and requirements of the Muslims within the paradigm of their divinely assigned role as the vicegerents of God. What is required from the Muslims is to practice this *Shariah* in their lives. Along with the notions of *Jahiliyya*, *Jihad* and Vanguard, *Harakah* occupies a central place in the Islāmist discourse of Qutb. The centrality of these notions in the Islāmization discourse of Qutb is vindicated by the very statement with which he explains the vital question: How to Islāmize the society? According to him the only genuine and viable method which the Muslims ought to adopt today for Islāmizing the society is that there emerge among them a committed group (vanguard) who believe firmly and act their belief firmly in their own lives and strive to make those surrounding them and groping in a state of *Jahiliyyah* follow them. Here Qutb stresses the importance of demolishing *Jahiliyyah* in order to free the conscience of those steeped in *Jahiliyyah* to decide the most vital question of faith according to their own conscience. The abolition of *Jahiliyyah* and the subsequent establishment of Islāmic society would take place at two levels, ideological level, and the practical level. At the ideological level, the vanguard which is thoroughly trained in Islām will lead the Muslims to expose the intrinsic lacunae and evils of the *Jahiliyyah* through wise argumentation. At the practical level, the vanguard will lead them in waging *Jihad* against the *Jahili* institutions. The later task, in Qutb's view will require the vanguard to demonstrate great spirit of courage, sacrifice and patience as the *Jahiliyyah* they will confront is well organized with powerful resources at its helm. It is important to note that Qutb does not advocate terrorism as his emphasis on offensive rather defensive *Jihad* led some scholars to believe in.

The fact is that he advocates offensive *Jihad* only to eliminate the *Jahili* institutions that have come to inhibit the freedom of the masses through various subtle ways. Qutb's aim is to highlight the importance of offensive *Jihad* in freeing the masses in any part of the world suppressed by *Jahili* institutions and ideas.

Though many a writers have taken Qutb's views on Islāmization as constituting the main recipe for extremism, yet it remains a fact that such unwarranted criticism levelled against Qutb can not vitiate the pro-humane and anti-despotic character and spirit of Qutb's intellectual legacy which runs throughout his Islāmisation discourse.



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## *Certificate*

*This is to certify that Mr. Shahzada Ashraf Maqbool Enrollment No. DD-4165, Admission No. 200610 has completed his Ph.D thesis titled “Islamization of Thought and Society - A Critique of Sayyid Qutub”, under my supervision. This research work is based on his own study of the subject and is in my opinion suitable for the submission for the award of the Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Islamic Studies.*

  
**Dr. Obaidullah Fahad**  
(Reader)  
Supervisor

## Contents

	Page No.
Certificate:	
Contents:	i-iii
Acknowledgements:	iv-v
List of abbreviations:	vi
INTRODUCTION:	1-5
CHAPTER ONE: ISLĀMIZATION OF KNOWLEDGE:	6-39
THE BASIC CONCEPT	
A Case Study of al-Farūqi	
SEARCH FOR A NEW METHODOLOGY	
ISLĀMIZATION OF DISCIPLINES	
Economics	
Political Science	
Sociology	
Psychology	
Education	
Pure or Abstract Science	
Other Disciplines	
SOME PROMINENT ORGANIZATIONS	
AND INSTITUTIONS	
Association of Muslim Social Scientists	
International Institute of Islāmic thought	
Institute of Objective Studies	
The Muslim Association for Advancement of Science	
and Centre for Studies on Science	
CHAPTER TWO: LIFE AND WORKS OF SAYYID QUTB:	40-81
Childhood and Family Background	
Education	
Visit to USA	
Joining Al-Ikhwān Al-Muslimūn	
Imprisonment and Demise	
A Literary Critic	
MAIN WORKS	
Aspects of Resurrection in the Qur'ān	

Artistic Imagery in the Qur'ān

In the Shade of Qur'ān  
 Social Justice in Islām  
 Battle between Islām and Capitalism  
 World Peace and Islām  
 Towards an Islāmic Society  
 This Religion of Islām  
 Islām the Religion of Future  
 Milestones  
 Islām and Problems of Civilization  
 Islāmic Studies  
 Islāmic Concept and its Characteristics

CHAPTER THREE: SAYYID QUTB'S VIEWS ON  
 ISLAMIZATION OF KNOWLEDGE: 82-110

CONCEPT OF KNOWLEDGE:  
 Science:  
 Humanities and Social Sciences  
 PERCEPTION OF ISLĀMIZATION  
 Islāmization of pure Sciences  
 Islāmization of Social sciences and Humanities

CHAPTER FOUR: ISLĀMIZATION OF SOCIETY: 111-142

JĀHILIYYAH  
 CHARACTERISTICS OF JĀHILIYYAH  
 Usurpation of Sovereignty  
 Demotion of Humanity  
 ISLĀMIC SOCIETY  
 CHARACTERISTICS OF ISLĀMIC SOCIETY  
 Liberty  
 Equality  
 Equality of sexes and stability of Family  
 Mutual responsibility  
 Justice  
 Harakah  
 Harmony  
 METHOD OF TRANSFORMATION  
 Jihād  
 Vanguard



CHAPTER FIVE: IMPACT OF SAYYID QUTB ON GLOBAL ISLĀMIC THOUGHT:	143-177
GROUPS AND MOVEMENTS TAKING QUTB'S IDEAS <i>PER SE</i> Al-Ikhwān Al-Muslimūn Jama'at-e-Islāmi Hamās Hizb Allāh GROUPS AND MOVEMENTS SUPPOSED TO HAVE MISINTERPRETED QUTB'S IDEAS Munazzamah al-Tahrir al-Islāmi Jama'at-Al-Muslimin Al-Jihād Moro Islāmic Liberation Front Islāmic Salvation Front Al-Qāidah SOME RECENT OBSERVATIONS	
CONCLUSION	178-183
APPENDIX	184-193
BIBLIOGRAPHY	194-203

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*It would be tantamount to committing a crime on my part should I not make a mention of Sayyid Qutb, who would always be in the back of my mind whenever I thought of giving up this work due to my own inconsistency or otherwise lack of enthusiasm. I feel no compunctions in admitting the fact that it was the richly adorned and pervasive intellectual legacy of Qutb that*

*provided me the only incentive to carry on my work. The irresistibly appealing character of his works has found a space in the recesses of my heart and it is now one of my cherishing desires to strive for acquiring a full understanding of his legacy, which at present remains incomplete.*

*Last but not the least I make a general mention of all those who directly or indirectly have been very much encouraged about my work.*

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 15-02-07.  
Shahzada Ashraf Maqbool

## Abbreviations

**AS:** Alaihi Salam (May peace be upon him)

**RAA:** Radiallahu Ta'ala anhu / anha / anhum (May Allah be pleased with  
*him/her/them.*

**SAW:** Salla Allahu Alayhi Wa Sallam (Peace be upon him)

**UK:** United Kingdom

**UP:** Uttar Pradesh

**USA:** United States of America

# Introduction

## INTRODUCTION

The September 11, 2001 attacks on World Trade Center, New York and Pentagon, Washington D.C, have led many scholars and journalists especially from the West to embark on a fresh and renewed study of Sayyid Qutb's (1906-1966) writings. However, in their quest for tracing out the intellectual roots of what they describe as Islāmic fundamentalism or radicalism, these scholars and journalists seem to have misread Qutb, highlighting a part of his legacy in a lopsided way without taking note of his whole Islāmic legacy. They seem to have focused on what they saw as the radical elements in Qutb's writings like his views on *Jāhiliyyah*, *Jihād*, Vanguard etc. in their own way, not withstanding or discerning and highlighting the purpose behind the exploration of these terms. The following quote from John Zimmerman provides us a convenient example in this regard. "The 11 September attacks can not be understood fully without an understanding of the ideas of Sayyid Qutb, who is widely acknowledged as the intellectual godfather for the various modern radical Islāmic movements including *al-Qāida*. Qutb's writings are important because they define the core elements that have been adopted by all radical Islāmic movements".<sup>1</sup>

This thesis builds on the premise that by highlighting lopsidedly what they consider as the radical seeds in Qutb's legacy, these western scholars and journalists have not only blurred the true character of Qutb's thought, but also made the otherwise humane character of Qutb's legacy look as inhumane.

In this connection, to write about Qutb's stance of Islāmization becomes a challenging endeavour. This thesis seeks to analyze Qutb's views of Islāmization in an objective and impartial manner. However, before touching on Qutb's stance of Islāmization, it is important to note that the term Islāmization broadly refers to the aspiration expressed by various Muslim scholars and thinkers from time to time for reshaping a deviant Muslim Society. However, these scholars differed in the advocacy Islāmization or reestablishment of Islāmic society in terms of its

interpretation. Some emphasized on a strict translation of Islāmic teachings into a community, others advocated a more accommodative form of Islāmization. This thesis includes a discussion on the views of Ismail Raji al-Faruqi and Sayyid Qutb on Islāmization. The former advocated a seemingly accommodative form of Islāmization programme popularly known as Islāmization of knowledge. In his view, Islāmization of knowledge is a prelude to any genuine revival of the *Ummah*. The *Ummah* according to him had fallen into a state of decadence because of a crisis erupting in its thought. He therefore, suggested Islāmization of knowledge as a remedy for this crisis in the thought of *Ummah*. This thesis attempts to throw a good deal of light on Islāmization of knowledge programme as advocated by Ismail Raji al-Faruqi and his co-workers. It is included in the first chapter of this thesis. Somewhat contrasting to these views on Islāmization the views of Sayyid Qutb. Sayyid Qutb's views on Islāmization are more of a rejectionist nature than of the accommodative one. He stresses on outright rejection of all that is foreign to Islām. This seemingly rejectionist stance of Sayyid Qutb is the direct outcome of his understanding of Islām. He saw Islām as a total system of life. "The Islāmic concept is perfect and complete. It does not require any 'spare parts' from outside of any change for completion ... Man is incapable of adding anything to it or making any corrections in it". He believed that human logic can never surrender itself to a contradiction and there are no contradictions in the Islāmic concept. The Islāmic system is so comprehensive, interdependent and interwoven that it covers all aspects of human life and the various genuine needs of man as well as his different activities.

Sayyid Qutb, however, it may be pointed out does not extend his rejectionist stance to those elements which have no concern with the regulation of our life. It is for this reason that he does not include the modern science and scientific discoveries, based solely on man's experimentations, in the rubric of Jahilliyah. He was, particularly, acrid at the adoption of western social sciences and humanities because of their direct involvement in the regulation of human life.

These social sciences project vividly different schemes of life in ignorance of divine system of life. They are, thus based on the usurpation of Allah's right – the right of ordaining a particular way of life. Sayyid Qutb uses his analytical mind to acquire a clear and deep understanding of various *isms* like Marxism Darwinism, Freudism, Socialism, Capitalism etc. After studying the anatomy of all these *isms*, he attempts to unveil their hidden nature and their intrinsic evils. He goes on to argue that only Islām is capable of providing a balanced system of life, which is in complete harmony with human nature and thereby caters to all the needs and requirements of humanity.

It is not surprising that corresponding to his understanding of Islām, Qutb suggests a peculiar method of Islāmizing the modern society. The methodology, which he suggests for Islāmization of society, is discernable in the Islāmic movement led by Prophet Muhammad (SAW) according to him. He goes on to argue that as this religion is divine, its method of transformation into a lively Islāmic society must also be divine or eternal.

“The message bearers of Islām should know that this is a divine religion and its method, which is harmonious with its nature, is also based on divine guidance. It is not possible to establish this religion without following its particular method”<sup>2</sup>

Qutb advocates abolition of Jāhiliyyah as the utmost prerequisite of bringing about the Islāmization of society. This, according to him is possible through preaching and persuasion as well as through *jihād*. His views regarding *Jihād*, especially his call for an offensive rather than defensive *Jihād* have been criticized by many especially in the aftermath of September 11 attacks. However, such criticism when seen in the light of overall legacy of Qutb and the conditions in which he wrote, appear to be lopsided and less appealing.

This thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter discusses the Islāmization of knowledge movement theorized mainly by Ismail Raji al-Faruqi in 1980s. The chapter highlights the methodological inadequacy faced by the *Ummah*



in the light of the views of some prominent thinkers associated with this movement. The chapter also highlights the contributions of some institutions and organizations regarding the promotion of Islāmization of knowledge. It ends with the conclusion that the movement has been more theoretical and as such appealing only to a section of the *Ummah* i.e. the intellectual class.

The second chapter gives a detailed account of the life and works of Sayyid Qutb. It highlights the main themes of his main works on Islām.

The third chapter assesses Qutb's views on knowledge and Islāmization of knowledge. The chapter projects Qutb as one who advocates the learning of value neutral abstract sciences but who detests the pursuit of the value prescribing knowledge contained in the humanities and social sciences. It also highlights the harms, which the pursuit of these sciences does to the humankind. They vitiate the humanity of man, undermine the Islāmic conception and challenge the divinity of the only Divine Being – the Almighty Allah.

The fourth chapter assesses the views of Qutb regarding the Islāmization of society. It starts with a brief description of the concept of Jāhiliyyah as conceived by Qutb. Then it seeks to highlight two main characteristics of Jāhiliyyah i.e. usurpation of the sovereignty of Allah and, demotion of humanity. The next section of the chapter gives an elaborate account of the Islāmic society and its chief characteristics. The chief characteristics of Islāmic society are discussed under the headings of Equality, liberty, *Harakah*, Mutual Responsibility and Harmony. This section is followed by an assessment of Qutb's views regarding the method for establishing the Islāmic society. It asserts Qutb's emphasis on a doctrinal method---a method that is discernible in the Islāmic movement led by the Prophet (SAW) at the advent of Islām. The chapter ends with the conclusion that Qutb calls for a revolutionary change through *Jihād* as well as preaching, keeping in view the nature of the surrounding Jāhiliyyah.

In the final chapter, an attempt has been made to assess the impact of Qutb's ideas on the Islāmic movements' active in the world today. It seeks to

discover the truths behind the criticism of some western scholars and journalists about Qutb's writings. In this connection, the superficiality of Esposito's claim that Qutb is the "god-father of extremism" has been examined in the light of the views of writers like Ibrahim Abu Rabi, and John Curtis.

Despite all the criticism, Qutb continues to be reminded today by a great majority of Muslims as a great Muslim who stood by all the tribulations and adversities and did not budge an inch from the stance of truth. Many young Muslims conceive him to be as their ideal. As the British journalist Yonne Ridley comments, "*Our Modern day heroes include those two sixties martyrs Malcolm X and Sayyid Qutb, both whose writings have helped define me as a Muslim. These are sort of role models and influences our youth need to follow...*"<sup>3</sup>

In the preparation of this work, I first sought to collect all the relevant material that was conveniently accessible to me. I took recourse to books and journals written in Arabic, English and Urdu besides visiting the websites. I also sought the help of daily newspapers. For acquiring a good understanding of the topic, I held occasional discussions with some of my friends and colleagues.

While writing this thesis I was very careful in the selection of the material. I made efforts to avoid the meddling of views and opinions of various writers whom I quoted.

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<sup>1</sup> Zimmerman, John C., Sayyid Qutb's Influence on the 11 September Attacks, available at [www.ingentaconnect.com](http://www.ingentaconnect.com)

<sup>2</sup> Qutb.Sayyid, Milestones, New Delhi, Islamic Book Service, 1998, p.40.

<sup>3</sup> Speech delivered by Yonne Ridley at World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY) Conference, Cairo, Nov. 2006, Quoted in *Young Muslim Digest*, (an Islāmic Monthly) Vol.28, Issue.12, Jan.2007, Bangalore, p. 37.

Chapter One

# Islamization of Knowledge

## ISLĀMIZATION OF KNOWLEDGE

### THE BASIC CONCEPT:

The idea of Islāmization of knowledge was first discussed by Sayyid Abul Ala Mawdudi (1903-1979) in 1936 in his Urdu work '*T'alimāt*'. Responding to the two glaringly contrasting views of conservative and modernist Muslims on Muslim educational system, Mawdudi advocated Islāmization of knowledge which according to him involved a "critical analysis of the western humanities and sciences to recast them in accordance with the teachings of Islām"<sup>1</sup>. The term "Islāmization of knowledge" was also explained by Syed Muhammad al-Naqib al-Attas in his work *Islām and Secularism* which was first published in 1978. In this book, he expresses his belief that "Islāmization" would liberate man from the clutches of westernization and secularization. According to him "Islāmization is the liberation of man, first from magical, mythological and animistic, national cultural tradition, and then from secular control over his reason and his language."<sup>2</sup> It was, however, with the efforts of Ismail Raji al-Farūqi that the idea of Islāmization of knowledge came to limelight, getting materialized into a full fledged movement.

### A Case Study of al-Farūqi:

*Ismail Raji al-Farūqi* was born in Palestine in 1921. After graduating from the American University in Beirut in 1941, he migrated to USA after the occupation of Palestine by the Jews in 1948. He received M.A. in Philosophy from Harvard University and another M.A. and also Ph.D. from Indiana University. He studied Islām at *al-Azhar* from 1954 to 1958. He also studied Christianity and Judaism at the McGill University.

Al-Farūqi was an extremely active academician. During his years as a visiting professor of Islāmic Studies at McGill University (1958-1961), a professor of Islāmic Studies at the central Institute of Islāmic Research in Karachi (1961-1963), a visiting professor of history of religions at the Chicago University (1963-64), an associate professor of religion at Syracuse (1964-68) and a professor of religion at Temple University (1968-1986), he authored, edited or translated 25 books and more than 100 articles. He was on the editorial board of seven major journals, established and chaired the Islāmic Studies steering committee of American Academy of religion and also served as a vice-president of Inter-Religious peace Colloquium from 1977 to 1982. He was also one of the founders of International Institute of Islāmic thought (IIIT) and the chief architect of Islāmization of knowledge movement. He and his wife Lois Lamya were assassinated at their home in Philadelphia in May 1986.<sup>3</sup>

Al-Farūqi's contribution to Islāmization of knowledge is undoubtedly great. Most of his works are addressed to "Islāmization of knowledge". In particular, his monograph, *Islāmization of knowledge: General principles and work plan* which is essentially based upon papers and speeches delivered at various conferences by him and his friend 'Abdul Hamid Abu Sulayman, contains the bulk of the theoretical description of Islāmization of knowledge. His other important works dealing with Islāmization of knowledge include *Towards Islāmic English*, *Trilogue of Ibrahimic faith*, *Historical Atlas of the religions of the world*, *The cultural Atlas of Islām* etc.

Al-Farūqi describes his idea of Islāmization of knowledge in detail in his monograph *Islāmization of knowledge: General Principles and Work plan*. In the very beginning of the monograph, al- Farūqi presents a gloomy picture of the Muslim *Ummah* in the following words "The Muslims enjoy the worst possible image in the world today. In the mass media of the world the

“Muslim” is stereotyped as aggressive, destructive, lawless, terrorist, uncivilized, fanatic, fundamentalist, archaic and anachronistic”<sup>4</sup>. Like many other deep sighted Muslim reformers prior to him, al-Farūqi endeavoured to find out the root causes of this problem and thereafter suggest appropriate remedial measures. As a matter of fact, in his endeavour to trace out the root causes, al-Farūqi noticed faults in the prevalent educational system of the Muslim world. He in fact blamed this faulty educational system to be the breeding ground of the crisis or what he called the “malaise of *Ummah*.” As he writes: “There can be no doubt that the main locus and core of the malaise of the *Ummah* is prevalent educational system. It is the breeding ground of the disease. It is in schools and colleges that self-estrangement from Islām, from its legacy and style, are generated and perpetuated”.<sup>5</sup> The prevalent educational system of the Muslim world is marked by a watertight compartmentalization of knowledge into secular, western or modern on the one hand and religious or traditional on the other hand. Each of these approaches of education is according to al-Farūqi, deficient in one-way or the other. The fallacy inherent in the secular system or approach of education is that, it assumes the superiority of western thoughts and regards them axiomatic truths that are universally valid and impeccable. Its inadequacy is also vindicated by the fact that even in the West , a number of scientific theories, principles and laws are usually challenged, questioned, faulted and even condemned as invalid and inaccurate, and therefore, unacceptable. The worst pitfall of the secular system of education is its assumption that Qur’anic verses are to be validated and proved with Science.<sup>6</sup> On the other hand, the inadequacy of traditional system of knowledge is reflected by its outright dismissal of any attempt to interpret Islāmic texts through analogies with some modern scientific principles, concepts and discoveries and its emphasis on the closure of the door of *ijtihād*

and the consequent down fall of *Mujtahid* to a *Faqih*.<sup>7</sup> This religious-secular dualism, in turn contributed to the degeneration and stagnation of the “thought of the *Ummah*” according to al-Farūqi. This separation of the religious and secular realms of the “thought of *Ummah*” is glaringly in contrast to the Islāmic thought of the earlier generation. “In early Islām, the *Faqih*’s of the *Ummah*-namely, the prophet’s companions, their successors, the *Tabi’ūn* and the great founders of the schools (R.A.A.) - were preeminently knowledgeable in all matters affecting the lives of Muslims. The *Faqih*s of the classical period were real encyclopaedists, masters of practically all the disciplines from literature and law to astronomy and medicine”.<sup>8</sup> Al-Farūqi, thus, sought to bring about an end to what he called the “malaise of *Ummah*” by highlighting the need to rejuvenate the “thought of *Ummah*” which had lost its originality because of the domination of western world view and the consequent intrusion of foreign ideas into it. It had virtually turned out to be a conglomeration of different methodologies. The only viable means which al-Farūqi thought could help restore originality to the “thought of *Ummah*” was by bridging the gulf between religious-secular knowledge. Al-Farūqi advocated Islāmization of knowledge primarily to eliminate this religious secular dualism in the educational system of the Muslim World and to enable the *Ummah* to have clarity of vision as well as a methodology to confront the contemporary challenges. He went on to regard Islāmization of knowledge a prelude to any genuine revival of the *Ummah* According to him: “There can be no hope of a genuine revival unless the educational system is revamped and its faults corrected. Indeed what is needed is for the system to be formed anew. The present dualism in Muslim education, its bifurcation into an Islāmic and secular system must be removed and abolished once and for all. The two systems must be united and integrated. The emergent system must be infused

with the spirit of Islām and (made to) function as an integral part of its ideological programme”.<sup>9</sup> Further, al-Farūqi holds that it is the duty of the Muslim academicians well versed in Qur’an and *Sunnah*, to master all modern sciences and undertake the task of integrating this knowledge into the corps of Islāmic legacy after eliminating, amending and rearranging some of the components of these sciences in accordance with the world view of Islām and the values that it dictates. The integration of these sciences into the corps of Islāmic legacy---the concrete manifestation of which is the production of University level text books “containing Islāmized knowledge” is the essence of what al-Farūqi called the Islāmization of knowledge. “Islāmization of knowledge”, al-Farūqi writes, “is in concrete terms to Islāmize disciplines or better produce University level text books recasting some twenty disciplines in accordance with the vision of Islām”.<sup>10</sup> The task of integration, however, is not an eclectic mixing of classical Islāmic and modern western knowledge. It is rather a systematic reorientation and restructuring of the entire field of human knowledge in accordance with the new set of criteria and categories derived from and based on Islāmic world view. “This is then”, al-Farūqi writes “the greatest task facing the Muslim intellectuals and leaders: to recast the whole legacy of human knowledge from the stand point of ISLĀM. To recast knowledge as ISLĀM relates to it is to Islāmize it, i.e. to redefine and reorder the data, to re-evaluate the conclusions, to re-project the goals –and to do so in such a way as to make the disciplines enrich the vision and serve the cause of Islām. To this end, the methodological categories of Islām, namely the unity of truth, the unity of knowledge, the unity of life, the unity of humanity and the telic character of creation, the subservience of creation to man and man to God must replace western categories and determine the perception of ordering of



reality; so to the values of Islām should replace the western values and direct the learning activity in every field.”<sup>11</sup>

Towards the end of his monograph, *Islāmization of knowledge: General Principles and Work Plan*, al-Farūqī introduces a general strategy for achieving the objectives of “Islāmization”, which he calls a work plan. The work plan fetches out the following steps to be undertaken for achieving the objectives of Islāmization.

1. Mastery of modern disciplines.
2. Discipline survey.
3. Mastery of Islāmic legacy: The Anthology
4. Mastery of the Islāmic legacy: The Analysis.
5. Establishment of the specific relevance of Islām to the disciplines.
6. Critical assessment of the modern disciplines: The state of Art
7. Critical assessment of the Islāmic legacy: The state of the Art.
8. Survey of the *Ummah*’s major problems.
9. Survey of the problems of humankind.
10. Creative analysis and synthesis.
11. Recasting the disciplines under the framework of Islām: The University Text book.
12. Dissemination of Islāmized knowledge.

In addition to these 12 steps, al-Farūqī suggests that conferences and seminars, and classroom workshops for Faculty training will also aid in achieving the objectives of Islāmization of knowledge.<sup>12</sup>

#### **SEARCH FOR A NEW METHODOLOGY:**

The Islāmization of knowledge movement received more insights from a number of scholars and thinkers. Among these ‘Abdul Hamid Abu Sulayman, Imad al-Din Khalil, Taha Jabir al- Alwani and Fazlur-Rehman in

particular laid special emphasis on the adoption of a comprehensive and systematic methodology which is based on rational principles and approaches that incorporate Islāmic objectives. Highlighting the importance for devising a new methodology for the Islāmic thought, ‘Abdul Hamid Abu Sulayman writes: “Change must come from within on the basis of beliefs and values of *Ummah*. Reform must begin at intellectual level especially with the development of a disciplined and systematic methodology for thought based on rational principles and approaches that incorporate Islāmic objectives”.<sup>13</sup> Imad al-Din-al-Khalil also acknowledges the need to develop a new methodology, especially for dealing with the intellectual legacy of Muslims to purge it off un-Islāmic, irrelevant and abstract elements that had introduced into it over the past few centuries under the dominance of western thought. He also stressed on the need to sort out a method of prioritization so that this legacy is classified into what is absolutely essential, freely accepted and so on.<sup>14</sup> Taha Jabir al-Alwani too accorded immense importance to the issue of methodology. In fact, he portrays in clear terms the “Islāmization of knowledge” as an overall methodological enterprise. According to him, “The Islāmization of knowledge is primarily a methodological issue propositioned on the identification and articulation of the relationship between revelation and real-existence. In its essence, that relationship is one of integration and permeation that clarifies the comprehensive manner in which the Qur’ān deals with the real-existential and its governing and regulating natural laws and principles”.<sup>15</sup> He also argues that the methodological shortcomings presently besetting the Muslim mind make the reconstruction of mind through the development of a new methodology an absolute necessity. He further explains that the “Islāmization of knowledge is not a cosmetic addition of religious terminology and sentiment to studies in social sciences and humanities or the grafting of relevant Qur’anic verses on to

the sciences or disciplines intended for Islāmization. Islāmization of knowledge may be viewed as a methodological and epistemological rearrangement of the sciences and their principles”.<sup>16</sup> In a similar vein, Fazlur-Rehman\* (1919-1988) also attached great importance to devising a viable methodology which is rooted in the Qur’an, to examine our own tradition as well as the western knowledge in the light of that methodology. The new methodology advocated by these and many other scholars was to be blazed in a manner as to overcome the inadequacy of traditional methodology on the one hand and at the same time eliminate the dominating influence of the western methodology on the other hand. The inadequacy of traditional methodology as pointed out by al-Farūqi “reveals itself in two diametrically opposed tendencies i.e. the tendency to restrict the field of *ijtihād* to legal reasoning, subsuming all modern problems under legal categories thereby reducing the *Mujtahid* to a *Faqih* and, the tendency to eliminate all criteria based on reason by adopting a “purely intuitive and esoteric methodology.”<sup>17</sup> On the other hand, the problem with western methodology is its exclusive reliance on reason and complete rejection of revelation as a source of knowledge or guidance. Thus redefinition of the scope of *ijtihād* to establish its relevance and use in all spheres of life including the legal, economic, political, social and cultural aspects, the classification of the role of *Faqih* and the rectification of the relation between revelation and reason are to be the main qualities to enrich and adorn the new methodology which these scholars aspired to develop.

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\* Distinguished and leading expert on Islāmic law whose radical ideas led to his move from Pakistan to the West in 1969. he served the US State Department as an adviser on matters affecting Muslim Countries, and was distinguished Service Professor at the university of Chicago from 1986. His many highly acclaimed books include Islām, Islām and Modernity, and Islāmic methodology in History.

## ISLĀMIZATION OF DISCIPLINES:

In view of al-Farūqi, the “concrete manifestation” of Islāmization of knowledge is the Islāmization of disciplines or more specifically the production of University level text books containing Islāmized knowledge pertaining to some twenty disciplines. The natural or pure sciences, however, are not as amenable to Islāmization as the social sciences are. It is because the social sciences are extremely crucial in shaping peoples’ values and regulating their lives in this World.

### Economics

The “Islāmization of knowledge” drive initiated by Ismail Raji al-Farūqi has perhaps matured more in Islāmic economics than in any other discipline. In fact since the holding of Islāmic conference on Islāmic economics in Mecca in February.1976 and the subsequent establishment of international centre for research in Islāmic economics, the subject began to be explored by many Islāmic specialists in the field. The initial insights came from scholars like ‘Abdul Badi Saqr, (*Islāmic Economics: The Basic Concepts*), Muhammad Shawqi al-Fanjari (*Islāmic Economic Doctrines*), Sheikh Mannā al-Qattān (*Meaning of Islāmic Economics*) M. Anas al-Zarqa, Yusuf-al-Qaradhavi, Hasan Abbas Zaki and many more. In the subsequent years, scholars like M.N. Siddiqui, Umar Chapra, F.R. Faridi, Muhammad Akram Khan, Khurshid Ahmad, ‘Abdul Azim Islahi and many others earned distinction in the field of Islāmic economics because of their valuable contributions to it. It is not possible to discuss all the issues involved in Islāmic economics here. Few may be mentioned here for the sake of understanding the distinct character of Islāmic economics as against the modern western economics. The issue of ownership is an important issue in Islāmic economics. According to Muhammad Nejatullah Siddiqui there is a consensus among the

Muslim scholars that real ownership belongs to God and that man holds property in trust for which he is accountable to Him; but they differ in their views on the issue of private and public ownership. Siddiqui concludes that these differences centre around three main points:

- (a) The central position of private ownership.
- (b) The relative scope of public and private ownership.
- (c) The degree of social control on private ownership rights and the circumstances justifying abrogation or abridgement of such rights.<sup>18</sup> He further states that many scholars like G.A. Parwez (*Qur'anic Economics*)

Nasir A. Sheikh (*Some Aspects of the Constitution and Economics of Islām*) in Pakistan and many Arab socialists assert that Islām accords central position to social ownership whereas the individual ownership is confined to matters of consumption, living quarters etc. He also quotes Abd-al-Qādir Audah in support of the socialist thinkers. On the other hand, thinkers like ‘Abdul Hamid Abu Sulayman, Baqar-al-Sadar and Ibrahim-al-Tahawi approach this subject in an eclectic manner conceding that individual ownership, state ownership and communal ownership exist parallel to one another in Islāmic law. Siddiqui mentions a third category of scholars who emphasize on central place to individual ownership in Islām. These scholars include Mawdudi, (*Ma‘āshiāt-e-Islām*; i.e. Economics of Islām) and Sayyid Qutb, (*Social Justice in Islām*).<sup>19</sup> Another important issue is the issue of distribution of wealth. According to Abul Hasan M.Sadeq (*Distribution of Wealth in Islām*), in principle, there are three ways of acquiring and distributing wealth in Islām. These are (i) inheritance in the wealth left by a relative at the time of death (ii) direct participation in the process of production and (iii) right of share of the poor

and the needy in the wealth of the rich declared by Allāh, compulsory and optional.<sup>20</sup>

Another issue discussed by Muslim thinkers concerns the abolition of interest. The Islāmic economists have analyzed the role of interest in the economy and have traced the consequences of its abolition. According to M.N. Siddiqui, the main reason why Islām abolishes interest is that it is oppression involving exploitation. In the case of consumption loans it violates the basic function for which God has created, which envisages that the needy be supported by those who have surplus wealth. In the case of productive loans, guaranteed return to capital is unjust in view of the uncertainty surrounding entrepreneurial profits.

The second reason why interest has been abolished is that it transfers wealth from the poor to the rich, increasing inequality in the distribution of wealth. It also negates the values of co-operation and brotherhood which are seen as basic values in Islāmic philosophy.

The third reason for its abolition is that it creates an idle class of people who receive their income from accumulated wealth. The society is deprived of the labour and enterprise of these people<sup>21</sup>.

Another issue is the issue of growth and development. Islām insists on equitable distribution of wealth. Likewise it insists on development that does not lead to the widening of inequalities in the society. In fact, basing its concept of development on the principles of *Tawhīd*, *Khilāfah*, universal brotherhood, justice, resource as trust, need fulfillment, respectable source of earning, equitable distribution of income and wealth, growth and stability, Islām encourages what is now popularly termed as “sustainable development.”<sup>22</sup> It guarantees both intra-generational and intergenerational

equity. All its teachings cater to the premise “To meet the needs of present without destroying the abilities of future generations to meet their own needs.”

### **Political Science:**

One of the prime objectives of Islāmization of knowledge is to address the problem of methodological deficiency besetting the *Ummah*. ‘Abdul Hamid Abu Sulayman finds this methodological deficiency in the realm of Islāmic political studies and international relations. According to him, the deficiency in methodology has rendered Islāmic political studies inadequate and this is despite the loftiness of principles such as the system of caliphate, *Shura*, justice, brotherhood, equality, freedom and responsibility behind them. There are two types of inadequacies in Islāmic political studies according to him. These are:

- (i) Misconceptions about original texts and models which are the source of Islāmic vision that regulates thought and *Jihād*.
- (ii) The perilous, waive, mindless drive for westernization, whose influence some of our intellectuals have opted for embracing concepts and systems which have distorted our thought and blurred our vision.<sup>23</sup>

Islāmization of knowledge in general and that of political science in particular is essential according to him for the *Ummah* to bring about a genuine reform. Without eliminating the inadequacies of this discipline, the *Ummah* according to him will not be able to reconstruct itself and produce able cadres of leaders. Muslim scholars have written a lot about Islāmic politics. While the traditional works in this field discuss issues like nature of Caliphate, qualifications of Caliph, election of Caliph, *Shura* and the system of justice and so on, the contemporary Muslim writings in this field seem to be baffling with such issues as Islām and democracy, Islām and secularism, Islām and the new World

order and so on. In the realm of Islāmic International relations, scholars like Majid Khadduri (*The Islāmic theory of International relations and its Contemporary relevance*) and ‘Abdul Hamid Abu Sulayman (*Towards an Islāmic theory of International relations: New directions for methodology and thought*) have made immensely valuable and original contributions. Khadduri argues in his work, that the “ultimate objective of Islām was to establish peace within the territory brought under the pale of its public order and to expand the area of the validity of that order to include the entire World.”<sup>24</sup>

In a similar vein ‘Abdul Hamid Abu Sulayman contends that “Islāmic theory and philosophy of relations among nations is the only adequate philosophy of peace in the contemporary world. It is the only philosophy, concept or approach that emphasizes the common origin, interest and destiny of man as the only firm base for understanding man’s nature, interpersonal relations and group interactions. Man’s interests and relations in Islām look like overlapping circles. Other World ideologies and philosophies focus on conflict management and consequently on war. The western philosophies of nationalism and class conflict emphasize the negative factor of conflicting perceptions, interests, and destinies. This attitude of conflict also leads to war and destruction”<sup>25</sup>

Some of the other notable scholars who have made valuable contributions to Islāmization of political science include, Mahmud A. Ghazi ‘political and constitutional thought: some guidelines for Islāmization’ in *Islām: source and Purpose of knowledge*, (Herndon, Virginia, IIIT, 1988, Pp. 119-130.), Obaidullah Fahad, ‘Islāmization of political science: some methodological issues’ in *journal of objective studies*, (New Delhi, India), Vol. 3. No.1, January 1991, Pp. 107-123, ‘Abdul Rashid Moten, *Political science : An Islāmic perspective*, Basingstake, UK: Macmillan, 1996, Muhammad



Anisuzzaman, 'Outlining Islāmic Public Administration: An exploratory approach' in *AJISS* Vol.7, No.3, 1990, Pp 305-313, and Mona 'Abdul Fadl, 'Paradigms in Political Science Revisited: critical; options and Muslim perspective' in *AJISS* Vol. 6, No. 1, 1989, Pp119-124.

### **Sociology:**

Sociology is regarded as the vastest discipline, among social sciences covering political, economic, psychological and historical realms as well. Many Muslim thinkers have made significant contributions in this field. Notably Ibn Khaldūn (1332-1406 AD)\* and al-Birūnī\*\* among the classical thinkers have made seminal contributions. In fact Sorokin Zimmerman and Gilpin have regarded Ibn Khaldūn to be the father of sociology and Toynbee hailed his *Muqadimah* as the greatest work in the philosophy of history.<sup>26</sup> However, the discipline of sociology as we have it today has its origins in the West. Its methodological and conceptual corps was by and large rooted in the West. Thus Euro-centrism is one of the easily discernible underlying philosophies of modern sociology .In addition the scientific or Cartesian epistemology which emphasizes the objectivity and value neutrality, inform the edifice of sociology.<sup>27</sup>

According to A. R. Momin, there is a sharp divergence between the Cartesian epistemology which projects a reductionist and deterministic conception of man, mechanist conception of society and a duality of mind and body on the one hand, and Islāmic epistemology and ontology, which is characterized by the noble principles of *Tawheed*, universalism, egalitarianism, the brotherhood of mankind and the ascendancy of moral dimension of

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\* Wali al-Din 'Abd al-Rahmān ibn Muahmmad Ibn Hasan ibn Khaldūn, the greatest Arab historian, who developed one of the earliest non religious philosophies of history, contained n his master piece, *Muqaddimah*

\*\* Abu Rayhan Muhammad bin Ahmad al- Biruni, renowned as the Ptolemy of his age, was a distinguished astronomer, mathematician, geologist, geographer and physicist.

mankind on the other hand. Therefore, he suggests that all professional disciplines should be informed with Islāmic epistemology.<sup>28</sup>

A. R. Momin argues that the Islāmic sociology, informed by Islāmic epistemology has the potential and the promise to offer a corrective to the pervasive Euro-centrism of western sociology. It can critically, he adds, examine in a broad cross cultural perspective and within the framework of Islāmic epistemology, the adequacy and universality of key conceptual categories in western sociology: role, status, socialization, community, power alienation, the dichotomy of the sacred and the profane and of tradition and modernity.<sup>29</sup> Many Muslim scholars have attempted to devise a methodological and conceptual framework of what they conceive to be an Islāmic sociology. Some important of such scholarly attempts include.

- (i) “Sociological Realism: an Islāmic Paradigm” by BA- Yunus, Ilyas, in *AJISS* Vol.8 No.1 1991 PP-45-66)
- (ii) *Aspects of Sociology of Islām* by Serif Mardin.
- (iii) *Islāmic Sociology: Towards a conceptual framework* by A.R. Momin.
- (iv) *Towards a definition of Islāmic Sociology* by Hasan Zaman.

Closely related to sociology is the discipline of Anthropology which broadly deals with the study of mankind. Among the Muslim scholars who have made attempts towards the Islamization of this discipline, the contribution of S. Akbar Ahmad of Pakistan is remarkable. After undertaking a serious and systematic analytical study of western Anthropology, Akbar arrived at some useful conclusions, needed for the Islāmization of this discipline. According to him, there are three methodological assumptions in western Anthropology that must be removed. First, he states that most anthropologists are ethno-centrists. They define the human person or society in terms of the natural, physical and psychic characters of the ethnic group to which the object of study belongs.

They do not see human person as a universal phenomenon transcending space, time and ethnicity, though standing within them. In their view man is not the vicegerent of Allāh, the cosmic agent who is capable of manifesting the absolute on earth.

Second, most Anthropologists regard Muslim societies as fossils drawn from a past age, not as living contemporaries with as much or greater claim to the present and the future of this globe. Their judgment is vitiated by this prejudice which causes them to identify with the present and worthiness with their own ideology and civilization, he contends. Third, Akbar states that most anthropologists perceive man as the necessary consequence of the interplay of geographic, historical and social forces to which he adjusts by reaction to their pressure or influence. They assume that an understanding of this “natural” process of human development is a necessary and exhaustive understanding of human nature. For them, only what is observable, measurable and materially sensible is “natural”. In their study man seems to be made as well as dwarfed-by circumstances of his existence, he is always the product of historical and natural factors, never the master to whom the angels were ordered to prostrate themselves.<sup>30</sup>

Towards the end of his paper, *Towards an Islāmic Anthropology*, Akbar makes following recommendations.

- (i) A simple, lucid sociological account of the life of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) be prepared by a Muslim and it should address a wide audience-both Muslim and non-Muslim and should be neither too academic nor too abstruse.
- (ii) One major anthropological textbook of high standard should be produced and then translated into the main languages of the Muslim World. It

should be used at the B.A. level and include sections on each major cultural zone.

- (iii) Anthropological monographs on each major Islāmic region should be produced for distribution in the Muslim World. These monographs should be simple, lucid, with attractive photographs, and used in Colleges and Universities.
- (iv) Visits of Muslim Anthropologists within Muslim countries should be arranged and encouraged and joint projects initiated.
- (v) Long-term studies should be conducted comparing the major social categories, which would help us better understand and reach conclusions regarding Muslim society and its immediate contemporary problems.
- (vi) Practical and development-oriented social studies should be framed in order to enable us to better plan for Muslim society in 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.
- (vii) The ethnographic and anthropological content from the writings of the great Muslim writers should be extracted and compiled in a discrete set of volumes. In this exercise classical Islāmic scholars will have to assist the anthropologists<sup>31</sup>.

### **Psychology:**

Islāmization of knowledge primarily deals with the social sciences, as they play an important role in shaping people's values and regulating their lives in this world. Psychology being the study of behaviour is of special interest for Islāmization in that it will help people understand and remodel their behaviour within the Islāmic framework. The western Psychology operates largely in the materialistic system dictated by materialistic values while ignoring the spiritual aspect in the study of human personality. Islāmic Psychology on the other hand, aims at regulating behaviour in the direction of

the divine will, with the goal of bringing worldly as well as spiritual success to man<sup>32</sup>. Quite a few attempts have been made at integrating Psychology into the Islāmic framework. One such recent attempt took place in the form of a major conference on counseling and psychotherapy from the Islāmic perspective held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in 1997. It gave birth to the International Association of Muslim Psychologists (IAMP). In 1980` a similar conference was held in Lahore, Pakistan. The noted scholars who have made valuable contributions to the development of Islāmic Psychology include, Louay M. Safi (*Islāmization of Psychology from adoption to sublimation*), Al-Zubair Bashir Taha (*The Quranic technique of cognitive behaviour*), Z.A. Ansari (*Quranic concept of human Psyche* IIIT, Pakistan 1994); M. Najati (*Quran and Psychology*, Beirut: Dar-al-Shuruq-1981), Shafīq Alawnch (*Human motivation: an Islāmic perspective*), and Akbar Hussain (*Islāmic psychology : Emergence of a new field*, New Global Vision publications, 2006)

### **Education:**

Muslim Scholars find the modern concept of education as being materialistic in nature, ethnocentric and based on the denial of truth and hatred for religion. Although they realize that it has brought creativity in education, but it has also resulted in the breakdown of family life and the spreading of unethical behaviour. Viewed from these perspectives of values, the Islāmization of Education in their view means to bring morality back to education and restore family and communities. This can be done by giving up the principles of secularism that rest on the presumed materlization of value and bracketing of morality. What they try to convince is that Islāmic principles of education are in no way an obstacle to creativity or to scientific inventions. Instead, an Islāmic education shall restore the belief in God, the unity of life, the universality of mankind. This argument is based on the empirical

observation that the material methodologies presently taught in Muslim World are copied from the western one's and are devoid of the vision which animated them in the West.<sup>33</sup>

It is pertinent to quote from the recommendations of the first World Conference on Muslim education held in 1977 at Makkah:

“Education should aim at the balanced growth of total personality of man both individually and collectively, through the training of man's spirit, intellectual, the rational self, feelings and bodily senses. Education should therefore, cater to the growth of man in its entire aspects- spiritual, intellectual, imaginative, Physical, Scientific, Linguistics and motivate all these aspects towards goodness and attainment of perfection. The ultimate aim of Muslim education is the realization of complete submission to Allāh on the level of the individual, the Community, and humanity at large”.<sup>34</sup> The noteworthy scholars who have made valuable contributions in the field of education include Syed Ali Ashraf (*Islāmization of Education: The Islāmic frame of reference II, Muslim Educational Quarterly*, Cambridge, UK Vol. 6, No. 4, 1989, Pp1-6), Syed Muhammad al-Naquib al-Attas (*The concept of Educational in Islām: A framework for an Islāmic philosophy of Educational*, Kualalumpur: International Institute of Islāmic Thought and Civilization, 1991) S. A. A. Hosseini ( *Some remarks on the principle of Islāmic Education*, Tehran, Iran: Office of the Islāmic publication, 1992), and M. Hasan Siddiqui (*Islāmic Education: An objective Analysis*, Aligarh, India: AMU press, 1999).

#### **Pure or Abstract Science:**

Islāmization of modern empirical knowledge is an effort to assimilate this knowledge in an Islāmic framework with a view to use this knowledge for the greater good of Muslim society. It is an attempt to understand and adopt all

that is good in this knowledge by integrating it with traditional Islāmic knowledge.<sup>35</sup>

The modern science and technology is value-neutral, yet leading among other things, to unprecedented damage to man's social, moral, psychological, economic and environmental systems. The Islāmization of this discipline is likely to contribute to the checking and stoppage of its misuse; and make it serve humanity with due regards to religious beliefs and moral values.<sup>36</sup>

### **Other Disciplines:**

In addition to the Islāmization of these disciplines, attempts have also been made towards the Islāmization of English, Linguistics, Law, Philosophy and Science and Technology as well. In the field of English, Al-Farūqi's *Towards Islāmic English* is worth mentioning. In this work he has attempted to clarify terms, phrases, words and concepts whose meanings have become distorted due to faulty translations and transliterations. As for as the Islāmization of Law is concerned, Ahmad Ibrahim opines that "the study of *Fiqh* (Islāmic Law) and of *Usūl al-Fiqh* (Islāmic Jurisprudence) should be linked with and bear on our contemporary lives, as they are actually lived and experienced, and their problems and issues, with particular emphasis on Islāmic solutions as they must be applied in an integrated form in Muslim society. The study of *Shariah* with all its related braches should form the core course in the faculties of law together with comparative studies between *Shariah* and secular laws in the advanced stages of study. Such courses should be given by a panel of specialists who, in virtue of their deep faith, commitment and scholarship, are competent to elucidate the integral, comprehensive, and sublime character of the *Shariah* as an effective instrument in serving the interests of the people, meeting the needs of the community, and

avoiding the pitfalls arising from the application of secular laws as have been recognized by contemporary capitalist and communist societies alike.<sup>37</sup> In the field of philosophy, Roger Garaudy presents useful views in his article “*The Balance Sheet of Western Philosophy in this Century*”. According to him the central problem for Muslims today is not the integration of the philosophy of Aristotle and the Greeks into Islāmic view, which in the past had severed the Muslims from the straight path. Nor is it the integration of that philosophy into the Islāmic view which has dominated the West since the Renaissance and which has only deepened man’s doubt of his own significance and even driven him to despair.

On the contrary the Muslim thinker today needs to learn from western philosophy nothing but its critical methodology, which is really its essential core, from Socrates to Galileo, from Kant to Husserl. The Muslim thinker needs to go back to the period of the first “secession” of the West (6<sup>th</sup> century B.C) when human thought first posed the fundamental issues of life: (1) the relation of man to God, to other men and to nature: and (2) the meaning and purpose of life, of death, of history”.<sup>38</sup> In the field of Linguistics Sayyid Mohammad Seyed has made a valuable contribution towards Islāmization of this discipline. According to him, “the ultimate goal of Linguistics is not to study a particular language and discover language-specific rules but to find out the universal features of human language in general-their structures and behaviours in so far as they help one to understand the innate capacity of human beings to acquire a language and to produce infinite sentences after being exposed to a limited corpus of that language”.<sup>39</sup>



## **SOME PROMINENT ORGANIZATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS**

### **Association of Muslim Social Scientists (AMSS):**

This association owes its origin to the realization on the part of a group of Muslim youth that the crisis besetting the *Ummah* is primarily in its thought. Such group of Muslim youth reached this conclusion after reevaluating and reassessing various Islāmic movements in the Islāmic World while attending different Universities in the United States and by holding a series of Seminars between 1968 and 1977. The AMSS was founded in 1972 under the umbrella of the MSA (The Muslim Students' Association of the US and Canada). The AMSS reached out to many movement leaders, scholars, and social scientists, both within and outside the US, to debate the issue of crisis of thought and seek their critical evaluation. Such efforts culminated in the holding of "The first International Conference on Islāmization of knowledge" in Switzerland in 1977. About 30 invited participants of this conference coming from different parts of the world reached to a unanimous consensus that the crisis of the *Ummah* is rooted in the thought and mind of the Muslims.<sup>40</sup>

The main purpose of AMSS was to provide a forum for both Muslim and non-Muslim social scientists interested in pursuing Islāmically-oriented research and scholarship in the social sciences.

In order to help scholars with their activities, AMSS organizes specialized seminars and an annual conference to help its members keep current on those developments and people who are relevant to their particular fields, and identifies other social scientists who share similar interests. The AMSS then encourages them, through its seminars, conferences and annual convention to discover the many ways in which Islām is relevant to their disciplines.

AMSS co-operates in a variety of ways with other research and Islāmic organizations with similar goals. In addition, AMSS introduces its members to placement opportunities and explores possibilities of initiation and participation in research projects through active contact with Universities and research centers interested in Islām and its role in the modern world.<sup>41</sup>

AMSS has contributed immensely to the Islāmization of knowledge movement through holding annual conferences, publishing books, particular the *American Journal of Islāmic social sciences* in association with IIIT. Among the annual conferences held so far, the following may be mentioned:

1. The 35<sup>th</sup> annual conference of AMSS, “Muslim identities: Shifting boundaries and Dialogues” Co-sponsored by Hartford seminary, Hartford, Connecticut. October 27-29, 2006.
2. The 34<sup>th</sup> annual conference of AMSS, “Muslims and Islām in the chaotic Modern world: Relations of Muslims among themselves and with other” Co-sponsored by Temple University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, September 30-October 2, 2005.
3. The 33<sup>rd</sup> annual conference of AMSS, “Revising Modernity: challenges and possibilities for ISLĀM” Co-sponsored by George Mason University: Center for Global studies and Islāmic studies program, Arlington campus, Virginia, September 24-26, 2004
4. The 32<sup>nd</sup> annual conference of AMSS, “East meets West: understanding the Muslim presence in Europe and North America” co-sponsored by Indiana University: Middle Eastern and Islāmic studies program and Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, 2003
5. The 31<sup>st</sup> annual conference of AMSS, “The Muslim World After September 11; Agenda for change” Co-sponsored by the American university, Washington, DC October 25-27-2002.

6. The 30th annual conference of AMSS, “Religion and Society in the Global Epoch” Co-sponsored by Muslims in the American public squat project (MAPS), University of Michigan Dearborn, Michigan 26-28-October, 2001.<sup>42</sup>

**International Institute of Islāmic Thought (IIIT):**

Besides concluding that the crisis of *Ummah* is in its thought, the Switzerland Conference also concluded that the complexity of the crisis, both in its historical and present day dimensions, make it far beyond the capability of individual efforts, no matter how dedicated and sincere one may be. It was then agreed that a collective effort is needed in the form of specialized institutions working specifically toward a resolution of the crisis. It was in response to this call that, in 1981, the International Institute of Islāmic thought (IIIT) was founded and registered in the United States of America to:

- (i) Provide a comprehensive Islāmic outlook through elucidating the principles of Islām and relating them to relevant issues of contemporary thought.
- (ii) Regain the intellectual, cultural, and civilizational identity of the *Ummah* through the Islāmization of the humanities and Social Sciences.
- (iii) Rectify the methodology of contemporary Islāmic thought in order to enable it to resume its contribution to the progress of human civilization and give it meaning and direction in line with the values and objectives of Islām.<sup>43</sup>

The institute seeks to achieve its objective by:

A. Holding focused academic Seminars and Conference. The institute has so far held a number of International Conference. Three of them deserve mention here.

The second international conference on “Islāmization of knowledge”-- (Islāmabad, Pakistan, 1983): This Conference was held by the IIIT in co-operation with the International Islāmic University, Islāmabad and was

attended by a number of prominent scholars and leaders who presented and discussed issues on Islāmic thought and knowledge. The participants called for a first step to be taken in the reform of Muslim thought by addressing the problem of the body of western knowledge and Islāmic heritage and legacy. The need to critique, analyze and reformulate western disciplines in a form that deals with revelation as a source of knowledge was heavily stressed.<sup>44</sup>

(II) The third International Conference on Islāmization of knowledge (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia-1984):

This conference was co-sponsored by the Malaysian Ministry of Youth and Culture. The call for papers was sent to an extensive list of about 10,000 individuals and organizations all over the world. The working paper presented a summary of the earlier conferences of the condition of Muslims and the need for Islāmization of knowledge. Scholars and researchers were urged to submit their papers in the disciplines of Economics, Sociology, Psychology, Anthropology, Political Science and International Relations and Philosophy.

The paper called for a survey of the present state of each discipline, a critical evaluation of its achievements, and suggestions for its Islāmization. Among other things, the third conference aimed at the following.

- (i) To develop plans for the reform of the foundation of thinking in the Muslim mind, with specific reference to its methodology and future priorities.
- (ii) To critique and discuss the forty papers which were accepted for presentation (out of more than 150 papers received).
- (iii) To develop an outline for the Islāmization of each of the above seven disciplines.<sup>45</sup>

The fourth international conference on Islāmization of knowledge (Khartoum, Sudan. 1987):

The theme of this conference was “Methodology of Islāmic thought and Islāmization of Behavioral Sciences”. A total of 38 papers were accepted for presentation and some 50 scholars were selected to present and discuss. The results of this conference, however, fell short of aspirations and hopes of the International Institute of Islāmic thought.<sup>46</sup>

The other methods adopted by the institute for achieving its goals include:

**B:** Supporting and publishing selected works of scholars and researchers in academic research centers in the Muslim world and the West and:

**C.** By directing academic studies toward furthering work on issues of Islāmic thought and Islāmization of knowledge. The institute has published a number of works in this direction. Some of the important works are listed below:

1. Toward an Islāmic Theory of International Relations; New Directions for Methodology and Thought, 2<sup>nd</sup> revised edition (1414/1993), by ‘Abdul Hamid Abu Sulayman.
2. Islāmization of knowledge: General Principles and Work Plan, 3rd edition (1409/1989).
- 3 Toward Islāmic Anthropology: Definition, Dogma, and Directions (1406/1986) by Akbar S. Ahmad.
- 4 Toward Islāmic English (1406/1986) by Ismail Raji al-Farūqi.
- 5 Modelling Interest-Free Economy: A Study in Microeconomics and Development (1407/1987), by Muhammad Anwar.
- 6 Islām: Source and Purpose of Knowledge, papers presented to the Second International conference of Islāmic Thought and the Islāmization of knowledge (1409/1988).
- 7 Toward Islāmization of Disciplines, Papers presented to the Third International Conference on Islāmic Thought and the Islāmization of knowledge (1409/1988).

- 8 The Organization of the Islāmic Conference: An Introduction to an Islāmic Political Institution (1409/1988).
- 9 Where East Meets West: The West on the Agenda of the Islāmic Revival (1412/1992) by Mona Abul-Fadl.
- 10 Qur'anic Concept of Human Psyche: Papers presented to a special seminar organized by IIIT Pakistan (1412/1992), edited by Zafar Afaq Ansari.
- 11 Islām and the Economic Challenge by M. Umer Chapra, published jointly with the Islāmic Foundation (U.K.) (1412/1992).
- 12 Resource Mobilization and Investment in an Islāmic Economic Framework. Papers presented to the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Islāmic Economics Seminar (1412/1991), edited by Sattar Zaidi.

#### Journals:

1. *American Journal of Islāmic Social Sciences (AJISS)*. A quarterly published jointly with AMSS, U.S.A
2. *Muslims World Book Review and Index of Islāmic Literature (MWBR)*. A quarterly published jointly with the Islāmic Foundation (U.K)
3. *Islāmiyyāt al-Ma'rifah*.

#### Achievements:

According to Jamal Barzinji, the most valuable achievement of IIIT in the first 15 years has properly been the awareness it brought among the scholars and intellectuals world over. IIIT seminars and publications assured that the need for ISLĀMIZATION OF KNOWLEDGE and dilemma of the *Ummah* in its crisis of thought is debated, discussed and researched in every serious institution of Islāmic learning.<sup>47</sup> Outside the US, the International Islāmic University Malaysia and the International Islāmic University Pakistan have been two big contributors to the Islāmization of knowledge movement. In

India it has been the Institute of Objective Studies (IOS) which took keen interest in promoting the Islāmization of knowledge.

**Institute of Objective Studies (India).**

This institute was founded in 1986 to promote directional and purposive research with a view to generating understanding and awareness about conceptual issues and current problems, and it highlights the ethical and moral dimensions of social dynamics.

Objectives of IOS are:

- (i) To set up institutes, centers and research facilities in various fields of the social sciences.
- (ii) To undertake research on problems and issues of social importance.
- (iii) To provide a forum for contact and exchange of views among social scientists.
- (iv) To co-operate and co-ordinate with all individuals, organizations and institutions that are working for identical objectives at the national or international level.
- (v) To award fellowships and scholarships for promoting the aims and objectives of the IOS.

To publish books, pamphlets, periodicals, monographs and project reports for wider dissemination of the Institute's programmes and point of view.<sup>48</sup>

In specific terms, the IOS has contributed to Islāmization of knowledge movement through (i) publication of books, research papers etc. and (ii) through organizing workshop and symposiums.

Besides publication of books, papers and articles\* the Institute has conducted a number of seminars, workshops and symposia for the promoting of Islāmization of knowledge. Here is a list of some of the important ones:

S.NO	THEME	CATEGORY	DATE	PLACE
1	Identification of Issues and problems of Muslims and the Nation and "Islāmization of knowledge"	Seminar	19-20 March 1988	New Delhi
2	Towards Understanding History In Islāmīc Perspective	Seminar	26-27 December, 1988	Madras
3	Islāmīc Economics and Economy of Indian Muslims	International Seminar	21-24 July, 1989	New Delhi
4	"Islāmization of knowledge"	Workshop	28-31 December, 1989	New Delhi
5	Research Methodology in Islāmīc Perspective	Seminar	24-25 February, 1991	Aligarh
6	Islāmīc Perspective	Regional	31 August-	Madras

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- (i) \* Research methodology in Islāmīc perspective (by Muhammad Muqīm published in 1994)
  - (ii) Islāmīc Perspective of methodology in Social Phenomenal Context ( by Jamil Faruqī in Journal of objective studies (JOS) (New Delhi, India, Vol 3, No 2 July 1991)
  - (iii) Islāmization of economics The Indian and global context" (by F R Faridī in JOS, Vol 2, No 1, 1990)
  - (iv) 'The case of Islāmīc economics' (by F R Faridī in JOS, Vol 6 No 1 1994)
  - (v) Islāmīc Economics methodology (by Muhammad Anwar in JOS, Vol 2, No 2 1990)
  - (vi) "Ethics and Economics An Islāmīc perspective" (by Syed Iqbal Mehdī in JOS, Vol 7, No 2, Jul 1995)
  - (vii) "Population growth and Economic Development An Islāmīc perspective" (by P Ibrahim in JOS, vol 6, No 2 July 1994)
  - (viii) "Islāmīc Banking Some unlettered issues of stability and growth" (by T R Bishanī in JOS, Vol 4, No 1, July 1992)
  - (ix) "Contemporary experiences of Islāmīc Banks A Survey" (by Ausaf Ahmad in JOS Vol 4, No 1 1992)
  - (x) "Islāmīc Sociology Towards a conceptual framework" (by A R Momin in JOS, Vol 4, No 1 July 1992)
  - (xi) "Islāmīc Concept of Society" (by Jamil Farooqī in JOS, Vol 4, No 1, July 1992)
  - (xii) "The Structure of society-The Islāmīc concept" (by M K A Siddiquī in JOS Vol 6, No 2 July 1994)
  - (xiii) "Islāmization of political Science Some methodological issues" (by Obaidullah Fahad in JOS, Vol 3, No 1, January 1991)
  - (xiv) "A brief note on Psychology in Islāmīc perspective (by Shamim Ahmad Ansari in JOS, Vol 8, No 1, 1996)



		Seminar	01 September, 1991	
7	Sociology in Islāmic Perspective	Workshop	16-17 NOV. 1991	New Delhi
8	Islāmization of Disciplines	Orientation Programme	27-30 December, 1991	New Delhi
9	Psychology in Islāmic Perspective	Workshop	02-03 May, 1992	New Delhi
10	Historiography in Islāmic Perspective	Seminar	19-21 February, 1993	New Delhi
11	Islāmic Social System	Workshop	30-31 October, 1994	New Delhi
12	Epistemology in Social Sciences: Towards An Islāmic Framework	Workshop	28-29 January, 1995	New Delhi
13	Theory of Knowledge in Islāmic Perspective	Seminar	10-12 March, 1995	Aligarh
14	“Islāmization of knowledge” and Research Methodology in Islāmic Perspective	Workshop	09-12 Jan, 1996	New Delhi
15	Global Scenario and Alternate Islāmic Model	Seminar	09 November, 1996	New Delhi
16	Islāmization of Social Sciences	Workshop	16 March, 1997	Calicut
17	Islāmic Economics and Interest Free Banking	Orientation Programme	09-10 May, 1998	Calicut
18	Islāmic Economics	Orientation Programme	27-28 February, 1999	Chennai

**The Muslim Association for Advancement of Science (MAAS) and Centre for Studies on Science (Aligarh):**

MASS was established on 30<sup>th</sup> April 1983 at Aligarh, India in a meeting of young Muslim Scientists coming from different parts of India.

Aims and Objective of MASS are:

- (i) To foster the study of Science among the young Muslim scientists in the Islāmic perspective.

- (ii) To study the development of Science in meeting the spiritual and moral requirements of human beings and encourage efforts meant for integrating Science and Humanities with life.
- (iii) To propagate among the Muslim masses, the importance of study of Science and to inculcate a true spirit of enquiry in them.
- (iv) To foster among young Muslim scientists the study of History, Philosophy and Sociology of Science, in order to understand, ascertain and critically assess the factors and the turning points responsible for developing Science along the mechanistic lines, resulting in alienation between animate and inanimate constituents of the world.
- (v) To foster the study of Science in a systems framework, as provided by religion and work out its foundation in religious term of reference.
- (vi) To co-operate in all such efforts which are directed at developing Science and scientific method, consistent with the human nature, capable of appreciating both the tangible and intangible relatives.<sup>49</sup>

Mass also conducts orientation programmes essentially meant for integrating Science with Ethics, seminars and workshops meant for introducing young scientists with newer and latest developments in scientific research methods, and training courses in collaboration with Centre for Studies on Science, meant for teaching History, Sociology, Philosophy and current issues related to Science and society debate to fresh research scholars. Here is a list of seminars and workshops conducted by MASS so far:

1. Quest for New Science, 8-11 Nov. 1984, Aligarh, India
2. Islām and science, August, 1986, Calicut, India.
3. Muslims in science and Technology, November.1990, Kolkta, India.
4. Global warming climate changes, March, 2003, Aligarh
5. Consciousness: Problems and Approaches, April, 2003, Aligarh

## 6. Education of Science and Indian Muslims, May, New Delhi, India.

Research Schemes: MAAS sponsors two types of research schemes, one in the experimental Science and the other related to Science and Ethics. The former type is run in laboratories of the Universities while the latter is carried out at Centre for Studies on Science, Aligarh.

Publications: Apart from books and monographs the MASS publishes MASS newsletter for free distribution, biannual journal of Islāmic Science, a quarterly journal of Chemical and Environmental research and an Urdu magazine *Ayat* in collaboration with Centre for Studies on Science\*.

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\*Some MAAS publications related to "Islamization of knowledge"

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- <sup>7</sup> Ibid., p.35
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- <sup>9</sup> Ibid., pp.8-9.
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid., p.14
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid., pp.15-16
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid., pp.39-47.
- <sup>13</sup> Abu Sulayman, Abdul Hamid, *Towards an Islāmic Theory of International Relations: New Directions for Methodology and Thought*, Herndon, Virginia, IIIT, 1993, IInd ed. p.XIII.
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## Chapter Two

# **Life and Works of Sayyid Qutb**

## LIFE AND WORKS OF SAYYID QUTB

### Childhood and Family Background:

Qutb Ibrahim Husayn Shadhili was a literary critic, novelist, poet, Islāmic thinker and Egypt's most famous Islāmic activist of the twentieth century, exceeding in reputation even the founder of the *Al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn* Hassan al-Banna (1906-1949). His passionate writings contain powerful maladies of contemporary Islāmic societies and an idealization of the faith through the words of the sacred texts.<sup>1</sup>

Sayyid Qutb Ibrahim Husayn Shadhili popularly known as Qutb was born on 9<sup>th</sup> October 1906 in Mosha, a village in the district of Asyut, some 235 miles in the south of Cairo, Upper Egypt. He was the eldest among the two brothers himself and Mohammed Qutb and three sisters namely Hamida Qutb, Amina Qutb and Nafisah Qutb. His father al-Hajj Ibrahim Qutb was a very pious, middle class farmer who was well respected in the village. He was also a member of Mustafa Kaamil's Nationalist party (حزب الوطني) and a subscriber to its paper, *The Banner* (اللواء).<sup>2</sup>

Qutb was greatly impressed by the exceedingly remarkable piety of his pious father in his very childhood. In his work, *Aspects of resurrection in the Qur'ān* (1946) (مشاهد القيامة في القرآن), Qutb delineates the devotional and God fearing character of his father in these heart-rending words:

‘Oh my father, this effort I dedicate to your soul. When I was just a kid, you ingrained into my instinct and conscience the fear of the day of resurrection. You never reprimanded me; instead in your whole life in my sight, the sense of accountability in the Hereafter would prevail upon you. Your heart and soul would always be filled with it and it was the talk of your tongue. When paying others dues you would be harsh on yourself and when receiving from others your own, you would be too polite and courteous. You would ignore others excesses even though you possessed the power to pay back and you would take it as atonement for your

sins on the Day of Judgment. You would always give others the things (if asked for) even if you yourself needed them and would say that I am amassing the where-withal for the Hereafter.

Your person (image) is imprinted to my thought. After the dinner, we find you busy in the recitation of the holy Qur'ān in the same way as would you do in your whole life, when you would send the blessings of this to the departed souls of your parents. We, the small kids would also recite along with you some of the verses from here and there, while we did not remember them fully".<sup>3</sup>

Like Qutb's father, his mother was also a truly religious lady. She was instrumental in bringing up her children in a purely Islāmic way, inculcating in them a deep love for the divine scripture. It was her intense desire to see her children memorize, understand and recite the holy Qur'ān in beautiful and melodious voice. Recollecting the scene of his mother's devotional love for the Qur'ān, Qutb draws this memorable sketch in his work *Artistic imagery in the Qur'an* التصوير الفنى فى القرآن 1945

"Oh my mother, the whole month of *Ramadhan*, when the *Qaris* at our home in our village would recite the holy Qur'an with their melodious voices, you would devotedly and attentively listen to them behind the curtain. I would sit beside you and make noise as the children are accustomed to. You would through gestures and signals insist me to refrain, then I would also give full ear to listen along with you. My heart would be delighted by the bewitching melody of the words, though beyond the scope of my comprehension

As I grew under your care, you sent me to the village primary school, your greatest desire was that Almighty Allāh open my breast and I memorize the holy Qur'ān besides grant me with a sweet and charming voice and I recite the Qur'ān every time before you. As your wish was fulfilled and I memorized the Qur'ān, then



you put me on the track which I own now. All this made a part of your desire complete.

“Oh mother, your little babe, your young sweet-heart presents the fruits of your teaching and guidance before you, though it lacks the beauty of recitation but perhaps does not lack in the beauty of interpretation”.<sup>4</sup>

#### **Education:**

God had endowed Qutb with a sharp memory and mental faculty. He was barely ten years old when he memorized the whole of Qur’ān. His educational life started from a traditional *madrasah* of his village Mosha. However, considering the more organized system of education and the clean environment of the government schools, he was soon admitted in the government school of the village. He completed his primary education in this school in 1918. In 1919, he went to Haluan-a suburb of Cairo for further education; here he lived with his maternal uncle Ahmad Hussayn Uthman, who was a journalist.<sup>5</sup> Ahmad Hussayn Uthman had close liaison with the famous Egyptian literary personality Abbas Mohammed al-Aqqād. Both were members of the *Wafd* party founded by Sa’ad Zaghlul and had regular visits to each other as they lived in the same vicinity; Aqqād in Misr al-Jadid and Ahmad Hussayn in al-Zaytun. On several occasions Qutb accompanied his uncle in his visits to al-Aqqād, and was astonished by the dynamic personality of al-Aqqād, his thought, his writings, his intellectual ability and his remarkable library which contained various kinds of books in both Arabic and foreign languages.<sup>6</sup>

Al-Aqqād had ostensibly remarkable impact on the literary life of Qutb for a long period of nearly twenty five years.

Because of the 1919 revolution in Egypt, Qutb had to delay his studies for two years before he was enrolled in 1921 in “*Tajheezia Dar al-ulum*” in Cairo. This *Dar al-ulum* prepared students for admission in *Dar al-ulum* College Cairo (Cairo University). From 1925 to 1928, he graduated in teachers’ training college. He also

apparently attended classes informally in 1928 and 1929 at *Dar al-ulum* (established in 1872 as a modern Egyptian University on the western model). In 1930, he was formally admitted to this institution and graduated in 1933 with a BA in arts. In recognition of his accomplishments, he was appointed instructor at the *Dar al-ulum*. However, he earned his living between 1933 and 1951 mainly as an employee in the Ministry of Education, where he held the post of inspector towards the end for few years.<sup>7</sup> Qutb renounced this post in 1953 on account of his disagreements with the government educational policies as well as on account of the government's submissiveness to the British.<sup>8</sup>

### **Visit to USA:**

As an inspector of schools in the Ministry of Education, Qutb was deputed to USA in 1948 with a government delegation to "study the curriculum of American Universities". Qutb stayed for two years and few months in the US during which he visited Wilson Teaching College of Washington, Colorado's Teachers College and Stanford University. During his visit, he also earned an M.A in education from the Colorado's Teachers College.

Qutb left USA in summer 1950 and visited England, Switzerland and Italy on his way back to Egypt in 1951. His trip to the U.S was a defining moment for him, marking a transition from literary and educational pursuits to intense religious commitment.<sup>9</sup>

After returning to Egypt from the United States, Qutb wrote his three part essay (أمريكا التي رأيت) *The America I have Seen* in 1951. He did acknowledge America's vast technical expertise and economic progress. But found it abysmally primitive in the world of senses, feelings and behavior. Qutb was appalled by the racism, sexual permissiveness and pro-Zionistic feelings of the Americans. Much of the essay *The America I have Seen* is devoted to issues involving sexual mores. "The American is very primitive in his sexual and in his marital and familial relationships

and for Americans sexual relations have always conformed to the laws of jungle. The American girl is well acquainted with her body's seductive capacity. She knows it lies in the face, and in the expressive eyes, and thirsty lips. She knows seductiveness lies in the round breasts, the full buttocks and in the shapely things, sleek legs and she knows all this and does not hide it. Then she adds to all this the fetching laugh, the naked looks, and the bold moves, and she does not ignore this for one moment or forget it".<sup>10</sup>

The description of Qutb makes it clear that he is disgusted with the American woman who not only leaves her body uncovered but also consciously uses it as a weapon. By using their bodies in this manner, women are prone to be treated by men as sexual objects rather than dignified child bearers. While Qutb has harsh words against the American woman's seductiveness, he also criticizes the way that American men use their muscular build to woo women. He cites an article in a magazine which surveyed different women coming to the conclusion that the majority were attracted to men with "ox muscles".<sup>11</sup>

This explains what Qutb argues is the "sexual primitiveness" as he saw it in the U.S. Qutb's experience there produced a culture shock that made him more religious and convinced him of the moral decadence of the West. Apart from narrating his experiences in America in his essay, *The America I have Seen*, he gave a summary of his view on America in his most influential work *Milestones* ( معالم في الطريق ), thus:

"Look at this capitalism with its monopolies, its usury... at this individual freedom, devoid of human sympathy and responsibility for relatives except under the force of law; at this materialistic attitude which deadens the spirit, at this behavior, like animals which you call 'free mixing of the sexes' at this vulgarity which you call 'emancipation of women', at this evil and fanatic racial discrimination".<sup>12</sup>

Qutb also felt betrayed in America, when he saw anti-Arab and pro-Jewish coverage in the news papers and movies that fostered contempt for Arabs and Muslims.<sup>13</sup>

#### **Joining Al-Ikhwān Al-Muslimūn:**

Qutb's trip to USA proved to be decisive. The detrimental consequences of the materialistic way of life as observed by him in America strengthened his belief in the truth and perfection of Islām. He returned to Egypt with the firm belief that true welfare of humanity lies in adhering to the letter and spirit of Islām. After reaching Egypt, he joined *Al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn* in 1953 and was appointed as the editor of its weekly paper, *Al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn* (الإخوان المسلمون). Subsequently, not long afterwards, he became the director of *Al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn*'s propaganda section and was chosen to serve on its highest bodies, the working committee and the guidance cell.<sup>14</sup>

#### **Imprisonment and Demise:**

In January 1954, the government banned *Al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn* and imprisoned many of its key figures including Qutb, because of their increasing criticism of the Nasser regime's domestic and foreign policies. The decree was rescinded three months later.<sup>15</sup>

An assassination attempt on President Nasser on October 26, 1954 and the suspected involvement of *Al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn* behind this act, led the government to launch a massive crackdown on *Al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn*, arresting about a thousand members and affiliates of *Al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn*. Seven of the leaders of the organization were accorded death sentence by the public courts (محكمات الشعب). Six of them were executed while as the death sentence of Ismail Hussain al-Hudaibi (1915-), the then supreme guide of *Al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn* was commuted to a life imprisonment.<sup>16</sup>

Included among the convicted was Qutb, the chief ideologue of *Al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn*. He was put behind the bars despite his frail health due to intense fever. In the Jail, he was tortured brutally by the police. The police used to torture him so harshly that they would pour hot water over his body and follow it with chilling cold water. They would harass him by exposing him to a swarm of trained terrible dogs and by giving him fire touches; they would also torture him mentally through indecent and obscene gestures and by frequently transferring him from one Jail to another. This inhuman and barbaric torture aggravated further the frail condition of Qutb. As a consequence, he was admitted in a military hospital on May 13, 1955. On July 13, the public court sentenced him to a fifteen year imprisonment. However, all this barbaric torture could not stop Qutb from using his pen against despotism and falsehood. Whenever he found comfort in the prison, he devoted himself to writing about the truthfulness of Islām. He wrote his two most popular works *In the Shade of Qur'ān* and, *Milestones* while he was in the prison.

When this harshness failed to derail Qutb from his stance, the Egyptian authorities resorted to subtle yet more sinister means to dissuade him from his bold advocacy of a just and truthful Islāmic order. The government sought to arouse cupidity and greed in him. A representative of President Nasser made a proposal to Qutb, “If you make a plea for forgiveness which shall be published in the news papers, then you will be released from the prison”. Qutb, however, rejected it, and said to him, “If my arrest is just, then I am content with just decision and if it is unjust still then I am not going to beg before falsehood for my acquittal”. In a similar attempt, the government proposed to coronate him with the coveted Ministry of Education in lieu of making a public plea for forgiveness. To its utter disgust, government’s this proposal too was boldly rejected by Qutb, saying that “accepting this post would tantamount to compromising with the falsehood against the truth”. When Qutb rejected such offers one after another, the government redoubled its

efforts to curb Qutb's bold advocacy of truth by unleashing a fresh and renewed course of severe torture on him. At last, because of his continually deteriorating health, Qutb was released in 1964 at the behest of the then Iraqi president 'Abdul Salām Aarif after spending ten harsh years in the prison. The government, however, imposed restriction on his free movement.<sup>17</sup>

Not long after his release from the prison, Qutb was again arrested in August 1965. This time the government alleged him of preparing an armed revolt against it. Along with Qutb, about 20,000 members and affiliates of *Al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn*, including the family members of Qutb were also taken into custody and were subjected to brutal physical and painful spiritual torture by the Nasser regime. Qutb's eventful life came to an eventful end in August 1966 when he and many of his colleagues were hanged.<sup>18</sup> Most of the Muslim world remembers him as a martyr, who sacrificed his life for a just cause.

#### **A Literary Critic:**

Qutb's works, pervasive as they were, demonstrate that he had studied extensively and meticulously. His opinions, thoughts and spacious genius cover numerous fields, whether these are literature, poetry criticism, narrative, journalism, philosophy, history, psychology, politics, oratory or Islām. "The literary potential of Qutb had obviously emerged during his village life. In Cairo he studied literature in the pre –University programme at *Dar al-ulum* and thereafter at the college. In fact, his literary life virtually began in the literary school of al-Aqqād who had serious concern for reforming Arabic literature".<sup>19</sup>

Qutb was endowed with high qualities of beautiful and thrilling expression in an inspiring and influencing manner, covering with it his living experience to his readers. He did not produce a literary masterpiece except after experiencing it by himself. He also gained experience by real efforts in his feelings and sensations. He was truthful in transferring this experience in full to the readers to make them read on

the development and provide a picture for them from the feelings and sentiments that were experienced by him for decades. His soul was not content with the hypocritical literary work. He was endowed with natural talents and outstanding potentials which were a witness to his literary acumen in transferring and transmitting the reader's feelings and sentiments. He authored thirteen literary works. The literary masterpieces *Child from the Village* (طفل من القرية), *The Thorns* (الأشواق), *The Enchanted City* (المدينة المشهورة), *Stories of the Prophets* (قصص الأنبياء) and *The Four Corners* (الأطياف الأربعة) are the major publications that indisputably substantiate the gifted talents of Qutb in the world of Arabic literature.

He demonstrated critical insights and analysis at an early age of his literary life. In 1933, Qutb published a book on literary criticism titled *Importance of Poets in Life* (مهمات الشاعر في الحياة), which consisted of a series of lectures in *Dar al-ulum* auditorium when he was a third year student. His teacher Muhammad Mahdi Allam, wrote a preface to this book and eulogized Qutb's outstanding traits and recorded his admiration of his personality, courage, confidence and his equilibrium. Although, he differed with him in some of his views, he considered him as an object of pride for *Dar al-ulum* and explicitly declared that he felt proud to have Qutb as one of his students<sup>20</sup>.

Though Qutb appeared to be harsh in his literary criticism yet he was always courageous in presenting his views. He was clear in documenting his thoughts in a balanced manner in all the subjects he dealt with and the models that were demonstrated by him. The people witnessed several campaigns of his literary criticism through various journals such as *The Week* (الأسبوع), *The Pyramids* (الأهرام), *The Message* (الرسالة), *The Culture* (الثقافة) or *The Arab World* (العالم العرب). Publication of his literary articles and delivery of lectures in literary conventions received great recognition and admiration of all intellectuals and scholars of literature. Some of these articles were later on collected and published in 1946 in book form titled,

*Books and Personalities* (كتب وشخصيات). Qutb's apparent respect for scholars is obvious in his dedication of his literary works to scholars, poets, researchers and literary historians who have been endowed with the knowledge of literary criticism.<sup>21</sup>

Among the literary personalities with whom Qutb interacted and left a great impact on him, mention may be made of Abbās Muhammad al-Aqqād, Tahā Hussain, Ahmad Hassan al-Zayyāt, 'Abd-al Qadir Hamzah, Ahmad Zaki Abu Shadi, Tawfīq al-Hakim, Ibrahim Abd al-Qadir al-Mazini, Yahya Haqqi, Mahmud Taymur, Muahammed Mandir, Abd al-Hamid Jawdah al-Sahhār, Ahmad Amīn, 'Abd al-Mun'im Khallāf, Abbās Khidr 'Ali al-Tantawi, Anwar al-Mu'iddawi and Najif Mahfūz. Abbas Muhammad al-Aqqād in particular played a key role in shaping Qutb's literary proclivities. Al-Aqqād was one of the most famous upholders of literary reform and rejuvenation in Egypt. His remarkable literary competence began to emerge in his childhood. He started to write in journals and magazines about the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He was regarded as the leader and savior of literary criticism in Egypt, as his critical and analytical articles were collected and compiled in the form of famous works.

Qutb began to develop his relationship with al-Aqqād at an early age, when he stayed with his uncle Ahmad Hussayn Uthman. He went on to become an ardent disciple of al-Aqqād. He used to frequently visit al-Aqqād's large library and followed his Friday morning intellectual and literary seminars. He began to attend it in 1920 and continued for more than twenty five years. He became famous in the world of literary criticism as a devoted admirer of al-Aqqād. Some writers commented, criticized and defamed him for his discipleship. Qutb admired al-Aqqād to the extent of obsession and loved him to the point of jealousy. He admitted "I do not deny that I was in severe attachment to his person to the extent of obsession, and that was the result of correct understanding of his works and deep agreement with his thoughts".<sup>22</sup>



However, in the course of time Qutb developed differences with the literary school of al-Aqqād and gradually disregarded it, renounced it and eventually founded a new literary school, which reflected unique concepts, views and sound methodology in poetry, literature, arts and criticism. Numerous literary personalities extended their appreciation for him. He was firm in founding his new school. He developed, maintained and reinforced it with new sharp distinctive concepts. It cited that Allāh, exacted is His praise, opened his eyes towards new features and ways. He therefore became a dynamic thinker, writer and researcher of this new literary school. It was only in the last stage of his life that he devoted himself totally for Islāmic revival<sup>23</sup>.

### MAIN WORKS

Qutb left a rich legacy behind him. He wrote some forty books and numerous articles and poems in several magazines *The Week* (الأسبوع), *The Pyramids* (الأهرام), *The Message* (الرسالة), *The Culture* (الثقافة) or *The Arab World* (العالم العرب).

However, his works pertaining to Islām can be viewed under three phases. Phase I reveals his literary prowess in the form of

- i. مشاهد القيامة في القرآن *Aspects of resurrection in the Qur'ān*.
- ii. التصوير الفني في القرآن *Artistic imagery in the Qur'ān*.
- iii. في ظلال القرآن *In the Shade of Qur'ān*.<sup>24</sup>

Phase two not only evinces his deep understanding of different aspects of Islām but also his prolific way of inviting the world to Islām with sound, effective and unambiguous arguments. In these works Qutb appears to criticize the eastern and western blocks and attempt to explain that “Islām” is the only option for the Muslim community (*Ummah*) to excel. The most famous works written during this phase include.

- I. العدالة الاجتماعية في الإسلام *Social justice in Islām*.
- II. معركة الإسلام و الرأسمالية *Battle between Islām and capitalism*.

### III. السلام العالمى والإسلام *World peace and Islām.*

### IV. دراسات اسلامية *Islāmic Studies.*<sup>25</sup>

Books written in the third phase portray Qutb to be a mature Islāmic thinker and preacher. These books, written after his trip to America and several European nations, kindled fire against the despotism and ignorance, enticed people to unite and strive for the establishment of Islām. These works also delineated the perimeters of Islāmic concept and Islāmic organization. They also tend to assert that Muslim *Ummah* today can hope to regain the same level of perfection which it attained during the life time of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) and that of the four pious caliphates provided, if it adopts the same methods as were adopted by the first generation of the Muslims. Qutb wrote flamboyant works such as *Milestones* (معالم في الطريق), *This religion of Islām* (هذا الدين), *Islam the Religion of Future* (المستقبل لهذا الدين), *Islāmic Concept and its Characteristics* (خصائص التصور الإسلامى ومقوماته) and *Islām and the Problems of Civilization* (مشكلات الحضارة) during this phase.<sup>26</sup>

### 1946: (مشاهد القيامة فى القرآن) *Aspects of Resurrection in the Qur'ān*

In this work, Qutb discusses a particular theme, namely, the artistic portrayal of the Qur'ān of the Day of resurrection. Qutb says that this is the second book, after the *Artistic Imagery in the Qur'an*, in which he aims at rediscovering the charm of the Qur'ān as it was felt by its first recipients the Arabs who understood it in a pure and simple fashion. As he writes:

“The far reaching goal is to represent the Qur'ān, revive its pure and artistic beauty; salvage it from the ruins of interpretation and complexity, and (thus) distinguish it from other goals and purposes mentioned in the Qur'ān including the religious goal. Thus, my objective here is purely artistic, influenced only by the sense of an autonomous artist. If the end results (of this work) were the meting of sacred art with sacred religion, this would not be my intention and it would not influence me. Rather, this would be an implicit characteristic of the Qur'ān.”<sup>27</sup>

Qutb discusses the origins and evolution of the doctrine of the Afterlife as it appears in the writings of ancient Egyptians, Greeks and Romans. He then moves on to discuss the genesis of this idea in the eastern traditions, especially in Hinduism and Buddhism. He contends that although the doctrine of the Day of Judgment was not a major principle of the Old Testament and early Judaism, it played a crucial role in the New Testament and the life of Christianity in general. Christian theology is elaborate in its distinction among the kingdom of God, eternal life, hell and heaven. Qutb was not interested in discussing the similarities or differences between the Islāmic perception of the Afterlife and that of the Christian. However, he contends that, although there were many Jews and Christians in the Arabian Peninsula before Islām, the whole doctrine of the Afterlife was alien to the pagan Arabs. Qutb wrote that Islām portrayed the Day of Judgment in a dynamic way, and made the Arabs believe in the Afterlife, heaven and hell, absolute justice and mercy, consequently Islām revolutionized their terminology, principles of cognition, and practices. In a nutshell, in *Aspects of Resurrection in the Qu'ran*, Qutb does not discuss the historical or political reference of the Qur'ān. His sole concern in this work resides in elaborating a significant characteristic of the Qur'ān that had been intentionally or unintentionally neglected by Muslim scholars and jurists.

#### **Artistic Imagery in the Qur'ān (التصوير الفني في القرآن) 1945:**

Along with *Aspects of resurrection in the Qur'an*, Qutb goes beyond preaching art for art's sake in this work of Qur'ānic aesthetics. He maintains that the Qur'ān creates meaning – or establishes a web of meanings – that can easily be detected if one studies its imagery, representation, music and syntax.

As a young boy growing up in a traditional village and listening to the recitation of the Qur'ān, Qutb was in no position to comprehend its epistemological principles and abstract ideas. What mattered was the artistic imagery that the different verses stirred up in the heart of the little boy. “My young and naive imagination” says Qutb,

“magnified the images expressed by the Qur’ān. Although it was a naive imagery, it stirred me and regaled my sensitivities. I would always treasure an animation”<sup>28</sup>.

Qutb laments over the fact that the liveliness, dynamism, and engaging images he remembered so vividly from his village life disappeared in his adulthood because of the demanding nature of existence. “Alas! Its signs of beauty have disappeared, and feelings of sweetness and yearning have drawn thin”. Qutb was caught between these two impressions of the Qur’ān .The first was pure, smooth, uncorrupted and musical; and the second was complicated, fragmented and devoid of insight.

In manhood, Qutb returned to Qur’ān with a new feeling. “I have returned to my Qur’ān by reading it, but not in the books of exegesis. And I have discovered my beloved and beautiful Qur’ān and found my sweet and longing images – images without the original naivety. I have come now to comprehend its purposes and goals”.<sup>29</sup>

Qutb holds that the history of Qur’ānic exegesis has failed to present a comprehensive theory of Qur’ānic aesthetics. According to him only two Muslim exegetes—al-Zamakhshar and al-Jurjani—came close to conveying the aesthetic meaning of the Qur’ān. Both discussed the inimitability (إعجاز) of the Qur’ān, and they laid the foundations of a general, although unsystematic theory of Qur’ānic aesthetics. Generally speaking, however the main artistic features of the Qur’ān remained hidden and unexpressed.

What is an artistic representation? Qutb argues that artistic expression of representation is preferred method of Qur’ān. It expresses in a correctly imagined way an abstract mental meaning, a psychological state of mind, a concrete event, a lively scene, or a human representation. Further more, the Qur’ānic method of representation conveys a concrete sense of life, giving it an almost real personality. In this manner, the Qur’ān converts abstract ideas into shapes or movements,

transforming psychological states of mind into mental paintings or scenes, and thereby magnifying the abstract and unseen truths of human nature<sup>30</sup>.

### **In the Shade of Qur'ān (في ظلال القرآن) 1953**

It is a comprehensive and wide ranging Qur'ānic exegesis that has mustered a wide and quite heterodox audience in the Middle East and other parts of the Muslim world. In its original form, *In the Shade of Qur'an* comprises a unique compendium of *tafsir* (Qur'ānic exegesis) spanning some eight volumes.

Qutb began to compose this *tafsir* in 1951 and completed it during more than a decade of his imprisonment.

Qutb's *tafsir* enjoys a reputation as one of the most popular and reader-friendly *tafsir* available. This is attested by the fact that it has been translated in to English, Persian, Urdu, Bengali, Malay and Turkish<sup>31</sup>.

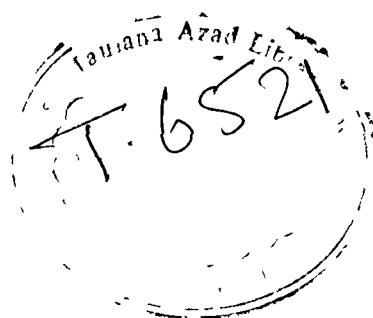
Overall, the appeal of this *tafsir* rests on its author's skillful use of literary methods to generate interest in an ideologically charged interpretation of the Qur'ān. It conditions its adherents to see a bipolar world of difference and division pit between pure Islām and modern paganism.<sup>32</sup>

Unlike traditionalists (traditional *Muffasirun*), Qutb does not list all the variant interpretations relating to a particular verse and mechanically indicates his preference. Qutb himself did not seek to be compared to the traditional *mufassir*. Nonetheless, traditionalists accuse him of deviance, in not following the basic criteria of *tafsir* and instead practicing *tafsir madhmum* (blameworthy interpretation). In his introduction to the English translation of part 30 of "*In the shade of Qur'ān* (في ظلال القرآن), Muhammad Qutb the brother of Sayyid Qutb observes: "The book is a campaign of struggle" because it is indeed much more than a commentary on Qur'ān.<sup>33</sup>

Qutb was not interested in addressing a western audience or the political and social elite of Muslim nations. He found little positive to say about western

civilization and culture and cultivated a conscious and unapologetic supremacist posture. A key audience for him are all those who identify themselves as Arabs but are asked to forget their Arabness to help carry “the message of a forceful and all comprehensive faith, (to be) delivered to humanity with mercy and compassion. More broadly Qutb targets a wider Muslim audience or at least the buried sense of religious identification in his intended audience. He is certainly not writing for an audience of ‘*Ulamā*’ or clerics, but the *home moyen sensual* who has lost his way in the thicket of modernity. Qutb’s own stated objective in writing the “*tafsir*” was to produce a document that spoke directly to Muslims and would be lodged in their consciousness.

His *tafsir* would serve as a living guide for a true Islāmic society to emerge, which Qutb explains in the following way: “We need, more than ever, to perceive the Qur’ān as propelling dynamic and lively document...it no longer represents in our consciousness that type of life that actually took place on earth in the history of the Muslim community. We do not remember any more that the Qur’ān was the daily preoccupation of the recruited Muslim from which guidance for action and execution were derived. The Qur’ān has met its death bed in our consciousness... What is required is for the Qur’ān to establish in the Muslim consciousness and life”.<sup>34</sup> Qutb is not interested in scholastic quibbling, but seeks to turn his reader’s mind to the problems confronted by the religion as it was revealed in its original context. As Ibrahim M. Abu Rabi puts it in his perceptive analysis of Qutb exegesis, “The Qur’ān must be understood, not for the sake of accumulating more knowledge or its artistic beauty, but for the sake of a personal and political revolution”.<sup>35</sup> At another level Qutb’s *tafsir* is also addressed to the select few, or the vanguard, who have begun to carry out the political revolution, rather than the average returnee to Islām who has just initiated a revolution of conscience.



The operational effectiveness of Qutb's *tafsir*, however, lies in its arrogation of a specific role in this process, as a form of *tafsir al- haraki* (dynamic exegesis) that seeks to revive, energize and move the masses from passivism to a reawakened sense of their Muslim identity and on the basis of this towards activism.

**Social Justice in Islām (العدالة الاجتماعية في الإسلام) 1947:**

This work written in 1947 is about the social justice in Islām. This is Qutb's first work where he discusses Islāmic thought and civilization. This work has been published and republished in about seven additions and in each edition Qutb made some changes and additions in accordance with his current study. The book has been translated into several languages including English, Urdu, Persian, Turkish and Indonesian. Its English translation "Social Justice in Islām" has been published by American council of learned Societies, Washington in 1953. In view of the author, the spirit and disposition of Islām is more important than its laws and it is this spirit and disposition of Islām which provides or forms the fulcrum on which the Islāmic system stands. In this work, the author has paid much attention to this spirit.<sup>36</sup>

The author goes on to argue that "we can not comprehend the nature of social justice in Islām until we have first studied the general lines of the Islāmic concept of Divinity, the Universe, life and humanity, for social justice is only a branch of that great principle on which all Islāmic teachings are based".<sup>37</sup>

True Islāmic thought can not be found in the writings of Ibn Sina\*, al-Farabi (AD 878-950)\*\*, Ibn Rushd (AD 1126-1198)\*\*\* or in the writings of other such philosophers whom the World calls "the philosophers of Islām". Their philosophy is only a shadow of Greek philosophy which in its spirit proved to be quite foreign to

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\* Abu Ali al-Husayn ibn 'Abdullah ibn Sina, Persian physician, the most influential philosopher-scientist of Islām.

\*\* Muhammad bin Muahmmad bin Tarkhān ibn uzalagh al-Fārābi, also called Abu Nasr al-Fārābi, Muslim philosopher, one of the preeminent thinkers of medieval Islām. He was regarded in the Arab world as the greatest philosophical authority after Aristotle.

\*\*\* Abu al-Walid Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Rushd, influential Islāmic religious philosopher who integrated Islāmic traditions and Greek thought. He wrote commentaries on most of Aristotle's works.

Islām. Islām has its own true and complete philosophy which can be derived from its sources- Qur'ān, *Hadith* and the life of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W). The basic concept of Islām (*Tawhīd*) from which all other teachings spring in the form of laws, rituals and deeds, can be easily and safely found by any researcher within the innate sources of Islām. One of the distinctive features of this book is that the author has made an attempt to separate the history of Islām from that of the Muslims. The act of judging or checking the Muslim history by the touchstone of the spirit of Islām has earned for Qutb a distinct and unique place. In the seventh chapter of this work, the author has included some examples from the history of Islām which are a vindication to the permanence and continuity of the spirit of Islām. They inculcate this fact that the religion of Islām is not a sacred memory of the past but is relevant and practicable today as well. Since its inception it has influenced every period of Islāmic history. In author's view the world today is in search of a new system of life which can provide it with a right faith and a just social system. This vacuum can be filled only by Islām. According to him, the principle of harmony is Islām's unique feature and it stands against any kind of polarization, be it physical, material, spiritual doctrinal or practical. "Islām came to unify all powers and abilities, to fuse together spiritual aspirations and bodily desires, to harmonize their directions and thus create a comprehensive unity in the universe, life and man."<sup>38</sup>

In Qutb's view, Islāmic social justice is more comprehensive than economic justice. The Islāmic view has two considerations. First, man is looked upon as one unity, both spiritual and physical, and the body is not disgraced on behalf of the spirit. Second, social life should be based on mutual love and respect. There is, in society, the absolute and just, coherent unity and mutual responsibility.

The Islāmic theory does not recognize social stratification, and it stands against the cult of personality in matters of its political philosophy. "According to the Islāmic theory just as the encroachment upon society by the cupidity and ambition of



the individual is a kind of social oppression which is inconsistent with justice, so too the encroachment upon the nature and ability of the individual by society is also a kind of injustice. It is an injustice, not to the individual alone, but to the society as well.

**Battle between Islām and Capitalism (معركة الإسلام والرأسمالية) 1950:**

This work of Qutb is about the battle between Islām and capitalism. It was first published in 1950. It became very popular among the Egyptian masses in particular because it launched a vehement criticism against the despotic capitalist system prevailing in Egypt at that time. The popularity of this work among the masses is attested by its frequent republication in 1952 and 1966 in the form of second and third editions respectively. At the time of the publication of its first edition, the British and the Pashas had embarked on a vicious plunder of Egypt and the labourers and farmers had been subjected to vagarious forms of atrocities by them. Qutb could not tolerate this heartrending situation of his country and he took it upon himself to challenge the exploitative, capitalistic system patronized by the corrupt regime of Nahash Pasha.

Except Abul Khair Najeeb—the editor of *al-Jamhur al-Misri*, and a member of *Wafd* party- and Ahmad Hussain the president of *Hizb Misr al-Fatah*, no other person had challenged this despotism at that time. Though both these writers criticized the capitalist system of Egypt, their writings lacked that clarity and the support of Qur’ānic guidances which adorned Qutb’s *The Battle between Islām and Capitalism*.

The publication of this work was a huge blow to the tyrannical capitalist system of Egypt. The role of this work in the military revolution of 1952 of Egypt was so much appreciated and praised that some Egyptian writers declared him to be the “*Marabou of Egypt*”. “*Marabou*” was the French author who had been enticing French masses to bring about revolution against the capitalism and despotism

prevailing in France prior to the French Revolution of 1789 AD. A revolutionary spirit is easily discernable in Qutb's *The Battle between Islām and capitalism*.

The second edition of this work was published in April 1952 just three months before the military revolution. The masses bought it so eagerly as if it contained the remedy for their daily suppressions and harms suffered by them at the hands of the despotic regime of King Faruq. The book was an open revolt against the tyrannical rule of King Faruq. Faruq's government was overthrown and the military took over the control of Egypt. The newly military regime, however, followed the foot steps of the previous government and started to "sell old wine in view bottles". The masses thus, faced a new form of tyranny. But Qutb's book was a declaration of war against all forms dictatorship. The third edition of this book was published in 1966 and the masses again showed tremendous eagerness for getting a copy of this book.

#### **World Peace and Islām (السلام العالمى والإسلام) 1951:**

In this work Qutb describes the only way to achieve a real universal peace. Having lived in the West and observed how personal interests dominate all aspects of materialistic life devoid of spirituality, Qutb discusses with his deep, insightful and comprehensive understanding of Islām, the unique yet comprehensive approach of Islām to establish real and everlasting universal peace.

How does Islām build Islāmic personality? What are the characteristics of this personality? What role does Islām play in shaping the society? What does the belief in Allāh, the Day of Judgment and accountability do with that? Why is Islām a comprehensive way of life that encompasses the human character and ethics, the social system, political power and economic system? What are the duties of an individual and that of the state government? And what is the relationship between the state and religion? The genius and inquisitive mind of Qutb discusses hundreds of such questions and provides convincing answers in this book.

Qutb makes it clear in this book that the Islāmic teachings have created peace in human nature. Islām instills its notion of peace in the soul of man via faith, which then proceeds to create peace in the conscience, the household, the society and ultimately culminates in international and universal peace. Islām's this notion of peace first addresses the conscience of man and reminds him of his responsibilities. Then it proceeds to create peace in the family within the ethical and legal limits. Then it goes to strengthen the feeling of security in the society by ensuring social equilibrium by establishing individual and collective norms, and legal justice and peace and security. And finally when such efforts are made at the global level, Islām accomplishes its goal of establishing peace through Jihad against the atrocious and tyrannical powers and by eliminating the elements which disrupt peace and security.

According to Islām, the relationship between the individuals of a society is based on love, mutual responsibility, cooperation, and peace and security. Islām establishes the principle that the basis on which the life of all human beings is based is the mutual balancing of rights and duties, just distribution of benefits and responsibilities and right proportion between labour and wages. Islām also says that the purpose of all these is to ensure a sustainable and progressive life. The motive behind all these activities and intentions should be to please Allāh, the Creator of Universe. It is from here that each individual and collective act and organizational effort is directed towards a wholesome and comprehensive peace and security.

In the view of the author Islām does not confine its appeal to the conscience of man alone rather in order to achieve its objectives and establish peace and security in the society it combines the means of order and consent, and legislation and persuasion. It guarantees justice and at the same time takes the responsibility of peace and security in society. It establishes government and ensures that there is a just, peaceful and cordial relationship between the ruler and the ruled.

It is these true relationships that act as a fulcrum for a true and strong edifice of peace and security in the society.

In chapter “World peace”, Qutb appears to emphasize the fact that it is the obligation of Muslims to eliminate oppression in all forms, be it an oppression of an individual over himself, of a group over itself or of a government on its subjects. Islām is duty bound to eliminate oppression and its causes from the world. It is because of this responsibility of Islām to eliminate oppression in the world that *Jihad* assumes a significant place in Islām. In Islām the *Jihad* is a means for bringing about a universal revolution (to eliminate oppression and injustice) rather than a means for expanding ones rule and amassing wealth.

In the last chapter of this book, the author has called for establishing notion of national and international peace as upheld by Islām.

The first edition of this book was published in 1952. Since then it has been published continuously, indicating the popularity it had among the masses.

**Towards an Islāmic Society (نحو مجتمع إسلامي) 1969:**

This work is essentially a collection of a series of articles and lectures of Qutb—all related to one and the same topic; “What are the basic elements and outlines of a Muslim society? How an Islāmic society can be established and what is the identification of an Islām loving society”?

All the essays of this work have been published in the journal, *The Muslims* (المسلمون) which was first released in 1951 from Cairo. These articles were finally compiled into a book namely, *Towards an Islāmic Society* (نحو مجتمع الإسلامى) in 1969.

In the very beginning of this book, the author has made it clear that the purpose of Islām is very important, pure, broad and unambiguous. Its objective is not merely confined to the welfare and salvation of the Muslim *Ummah* rather it aims at preventing the whole humanity from falling into the quagmire of gruesome problems and crisis. Today, the whole humanity is gripped in sufferings and anxieties. It is

Islām only that can eliminate sufferings of humanity if it sincerely adheres to it. If we understand reality and essence of our call (invitation), the importance of our objective and the purpose of our existence, then the whole world is seeing our path; we can solve its problems, and by forging its relations with its Creator (we) can prevent it from the failures it witnesses in this world and most likely to witness in the Hereafter if it does not mend its ways.

Qutb seems to emphasize in this work that the Islāmic system is not a past story, nor has it been added to history as a mere beautiful drama (story); it has been active in every era in one and has been affecting the humanity. Today too such evidences are there which indicate that the Islāmic law remains lively today (as it was during the period of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) and his companions) and can solve the intricacies of modern age and guide mankind in the affairs of life and death.

Qutb also discusses the distinctive features of Islāmic society in this work. According to him, the first distinctive characteristic of Islāmic society is that it is based on the laws made by Allāh Who alone possesses the knowledge of the problems and needs and the interests and desires of all human beings. He is the God of whole humanity and He knows no discrimination among the human beings. The second distinctive feature of Islāmic society is that the basics are quite clear there while the other aspects have been left open for *ijitihad*. This society is divine wherein justice reigns supreme. This society is a universal society. It is not a transient or timely society. Nor is it confined to any particular region. Its rules and laws are universal. The whole humanity benefits from such society and all possess the right to reap the fruits of their faith and blessings in this society.

#### **This Religion of Islām (هذا الدين) 1954:**

In this work, the author has attempted to clarify the objections and doubts regarding the religion of Islām and its operation in human life. He has also highlighted the possibilities of its viability, capability and operation in the present

times. The faith of Islām being a divinely ordained path for human life, why then does its realization in the life of mankind depend on the exertions and efforts of men themselves, within the limits of their human existence in a given environment? Why doesn't Allāh cause it to operate in human life in a miraculous manner? When like other systems of life, Islām too depends on human efforts for its realization, what then is the need to strive for the establishment of this religion alone? What is the basic and essential difference between Islām and other systems of life? What are the distinctive features of the Islāmic system of life? Why is it obligatory to work for the realization of this religion in human life? The author has given quite satisfactory answers to all these questions.

Why must we make efforts for the realization of Islām in our life? Answering this question, the author says that Allāh has chosen that His divinely ordained path for human life should be realized through human exertions, within the limits of human capacities. He has chosen thereby to raise human being to a point of excellence corresponding to the exertions he has made, the abilities he has applied, and the patience with which he has met misfortune for the sake of realizing this divinely ordained path, of removing evil from himself and from life around him.

The only way to implement this religion is that there be group of people who undertake this task (of implementing it) , believing in it completely and conforming to it as closely as possible, trying to instill and penetrate it into the hearts and lives of others too, striving to this end with all that they possess. They struggle against human weaknesses and temptations within themselves; they struggle against those whom weakness and passion impel to resist divine guidance. They attain thereby, in the realization of the divine path, a point made possible by human nature and permitted material realities. They begin with man as he stands and do not neglect his actual state and demands as he passes through and traverses the stages of the divinely ordained path. This group will triumph over their own souls and those of others at

times, and at other times will be routed by their own souls and those of others, in accordance with the efforts they make and the means they chose for the battle, suitable for the circumstances and the needs of the age. More important in determining victory or defeat is however, the degree to which they truly, in them, represent this path, and are able to give it practical expression in their personal conduct and behavior.<sup>39</sup>

Regarding the distinctive features of the divine path of Islām, the author has highlighted the following points in this work:

- i. This is the only path which respects the nobility of man, grants him true freedom and releases him from slavery.
- ii. It liberates (men) from the servitude of (other) men and invites them to the servitude of God, for servitude to God releases man from servitude to others.
- iii. Islām is the only path which is free of the results of human desires, human weaknesses and human self-interest. It is free from any attempt to gain self-interest by means of legislating for the benefit of that individual, his family, class, people or race.
- iv. It is only through (following) this path that true, complete and comprehensive justice can be obtained, that justice which can not be reached by any human, man-made system.
- v. This is the only path which is based on comprehensive view (knowledge) of the existence of man, his place and status and of the true purpose of his existence – not as it is defined by the ignorance, weakness and illusion of humanity.
- vi. This is the path that alone is in conformity with overall plan of being.<sup>40</sup>

For Qutb, Islām demands that the absolute control over human beings belong to God and the path ordained by God; it denies this control to any of God's creation, and to any path laid down by any one other than God .It considers this to be an act of

complete infidelity, and a clear ascription of partners to God. Islām also prescribes the erection of an Islāmic society in the aegis of which the Muslim individual can live his religion, in accordance with the character given him thereby.<sup>41</sup> But Islām proceeds gradually in accordance with human nature. It encourages human nature to take one direction, discourages it from taking another direction, and strengthens it when it weakens. But it never breaks or destroys it, or attempts to do so. It is patient with it as the wise and the knowing are patient, like him who is confident of the realization of the long- term aim, which can not be obtained in one rush, or even in two, three ten, a hundred or a thousand! All that is demanded is the exertion of effort to progress along the path.<sup>42</sup>

Towards the end of this work, Qutb stresses the fact that if humankind is merely invited again to the path of Islām, it would appear foreign to it and would be disliked by it. What is required is that the Muslim *Ummah* understand its special duty and go ahead after strengthening its true character. It should not forget to take the where-withal of journey. What is that “where-withal of journey”? Qutb’s answer is that it is only one thing i.e. the fear of Allāh, consciousness of the reality of God, action in accordance with His Will and an absolute trust in His explicit promise “The victory of the believers is a duty incumbent upon us”<sup>43</sup>

#### **Islām the Religion of Future (المستقبل لهذا الدين) 1954:**

This book was first published in 1974 from *Dar-al Shuruq*, Beirut. It is divided into seven chapters. This work seems to emphasize the fact that the welfare of humanity lies in Islām alone, because it is a divine religion that was sent by the Creator of universe for the guidance of mankind through His messengers. The final and complete form of this religion was given to mankind through the last messenger Muhammad (S.A.W). Because the Creator of this religion is the same Allāh who created the whole universe, therefore except this religion no other religion can



guarantee the real welfare of humanity. The good of humanity is inherent in the sincere obedience of this religion.

According to Qutb, throughout its long history, Islām has endured and withstood blows more violent and more sinister than those directed against its pioneers every where at the present. With its own resources of power and its intrinsic vitality, it struggled through all, emerged victorious, continued to survive and preserved the communities and lands under its protection, even doing so without a sophisticated armory.<sup>44</sup>

The second chapter of this work is very important. In this, the author has attempted to unveil the fact that every religion is a system of life. There is a strong correlation between the social order and the ideological order of any religion. In fact still stronger than this strong correlation is the basic biological emergence of the social order from the ideological ideal. The social order, with all its characteristics, is an offshoot of the ideological ideal. It grows biologically and naturally and is completely adapted in accordance with the assessment of life which that conception demands relative to the human situation, state of existence, and the goals of man in this life. This type of growth and evolution are in the right course of things; indeed, such is the only course. No social order could naturally and righteously emerge and establish itself unless it derives from a realistic conception of the facts of life and the ends of human existence.

#### **Milestones (معالم في الطريق) 1964:**

Qutb is best known for his *Milestones* (معالم في الطريق). It was first published in 1964. Gilles Kepel describes it as “*the Islāmic equivalent of Lenin’s “what is to be done”*”.<sup>45</sup>

*Milestones* marked the completion of Qutb’s transition from an Islāmist to a radical Islāmist and established him as the twentieth century’s most important Islāmist thinker and writer.

In this work, Qutb lays down a revolutionary manifesto for Islāmic activists. Like most contemporary revivalists, he was distressed with the growing distance between Islāmic values, institutions and practices, and the emerging post colonial Muslim societies, especially in his native country Egypt. In *Milestones*, he sought to answer some of the fundamental questions such as “why Islām needs to be revived”? Why no other way of life is adequate? What is the true essence of an Islāmic identity and an Islāmic existence? How Islām was established by the holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) and his rightly guided companions? Can the same method, which was undoubtedly divine in its conception, be replicated or repeated now? Qutb seems to be particularly concerned with this issue of “Islāmic methodology” for establishing Islām again in the same way as was done by that “unique generation of the Muslims”. He believes that Islāmic values and the manner in which they are to be realized, both together constitute the faith of Islām.

Relying entirely on the Qur’ān, Qutb uses the concepts of *Jāhiliyyah*, Islāmic concept, Islāmic methodology, *Jihad* and Allāh’s sovereignty to delineate the strategy by which Muslims would:

- i. Realize the true significance and implications of the most fundamental article and proclamation “there is no god but Allāh, having faith in the exclusive Oneness of Allāh.
- ii. Understand the imperfections, injustices and poverty of *Jāhiliyyah*.
- iii. Empower themselves by realizing the meaning of أشهد أن محمد الرسول الله (bearing witness that Muhammad (S.A.W) is Allāh’s messenger)-internalizing his method of *Da’wah* and submitting to the will and laws of Allāh.
- iv. Through this Islāmic methodology, as articulated in the Qur’ān and manifested in the practices of Muhammad (S.A.W), which does not demarcate theory from practice, and discourse from action, establish an Islāmic society

or Islāmic order---the Islāmic order which is Allāh's most significant gift to the entire humanity.

The most remarkable aspect of *Milestones* however, is the author's insistence on an approach in "stages" and the repeated assertion that the need for implementing Islāmic law would not arise until every member of the community had completely submitted to the sovereignty of Allāh and by that agreed to live under Allāh's laws. Laws would then be framed merely to serve the needs of this "living community of Islām". It is worthy to note that Qutb was not the first to use the term "*Jāhiliyyah*" in his work. The term is usually used to describe the Arabian Peninsula as being in a state ignorance prior to the advent of Islām. Qutb applied this term to contemporary societies. Prior to Qutb, it had been used by Mawdudi and also by Sayyid Abul Hassan Ali Nadwi in this context. However, whereas Mawdudi believed that the world was a mixture of *Jāhiliyyah* and Islām, Qutb believed that the world was either one or another (No mixture).<sup>46</sup>

Qutb maintains in this work that *Jāhiliyyah* is not the pre-Islāmic historical era of paganism,-as usually understood-it is an ever present condition of denying Allāh's rule, usurping His "greatest attribute of sovereignty", and living by man-made laws that enslave men to their rulers and engender oppression and tyranny. The first step towards renewal is to judge all societies, institutions and regimes by these criteria. All those that do not fulfill these criteria are proclaimed *Jāhilī*. Qutb goes on to fetch a list of *Jāhilī* societies in a somewhat hierarchical order of their *Jāhiliyyah* character. The communist societies according to him top the list and the Jewish, Christian and contemporary Muslim societies not living by divine law follow the list. No Islāmic society exists in the world today.

Qutb proposes a two pronged strategy for revival. The Muslims must engage in the proclamation of the message (*Da'wah*) and simultaneously establish a true Muslim community (*Jama'a*) that will serve as the vanguard (*taliya*) of renewal.

Qutb goes on to dedicate his *Milestones* to this vanguard. However, he does not say much about the vanguard except that it must carry the message of Islām by “marching through the vast ocean of *Jāhiliyyah*” which has encompassed the entire world. Elsewhere he envisaged that the vanguard would be confined to the “chosen elite” who will lead a life-and-death struggle against the opposing forces.

**Islām and Problems of Civilization (الإسلام و المشكلات الحضارة) 1962:**

This work is an erudite research about the problems of modern civilization and their solutions in Islām .It was first published in 1962 from *Dar al-Ihya al kitab al-Arabia*.

The author expresses a philosophical thought in this work. In order to prove what he considers to be the plight of modern man from an Islāmic doctrinal perspective, Qutb quotes lengthy versions from French scientist Alex Carrel’s “*Man the unknown*”. Evidently Qutb was impressed with Alex carrel’s insight into the meaning of man’s existence, and especially man’s situation in western civilization.

Alex Carrel contends that the West has not paid sufficient attention to the study of man ---- his consciousness, spiritual and mental activities, whims and desires and that the West is far more advanced in general, in the spheres of technology and hard sciences than it is in the field of psychology. Qutb and Alex Carrel invoke an oft repeated thesis current in early twentieth century western thought, and best represented by the American philosopher William James, “for a hundred and fifty years past the progress of science has seemed to mean the enlargement of the material of universe and diminution of man’s importance”<sup>47</sup>. Although men and women have joyfully welcomed modern civilization because of the material comforts it has to offer, modern man is not as well balanced, emotionally and intellectually, as was the classical man. In Carrel’s view “modern civilization seems to be incapable of producing people endowed with imagination, intelligence and courage. In practically every country there is a decrease in intellectual and moral caliber of those who carry

the responsibility of affairs”. Carrel, therefore, contends that the predicament of modern civilization lies in its inability to produce men of sufficient intelligence and courage to guide it along the dangerous road on which it is stumbling. According to him “modern civilization finds itself in a difficult situation because it does not suit us. It has been erected without any real knowledge of our own nature. It was born from the whims of scientific discoveries, from the appetites of men, their illusions, their theories and their desires. Although constructed by our efforts; it is not adjusted to our size and shape”.

Qutb follows the foot steps of Carrel and contends that the polarization of man into the spiritual and the material is the result of the victory of science over religion. Man must be treated as an indivisible whole. Alas! this is not the situation of man in advanced technological societies. Modern society ignores the uniqueness of the individual and his strong commitment to freedom. Qutb expresses agreement with Alex Carrel and assumes that modern man lives in a spiritual, mental and psychological chaos and in uncertainty about the future. Opposed to this ignorance about man, Qutb argues that the Qur’ānic conception of man treats every individual as unique being endowed with a divine mission.

Qutb claims that the reason behind the ignorance concerning the nature of man in the industrial world is simple. It was brought about by the historical conflict between the church and the men of science. According to Qutb the principles of scientific research developed in Muslim Spain (Andlusia), and the pragmatic scientific method originally developed by Muslims was borrowed by European scientists, such as Roger and Francis Bacon.

Assimilating the Muslim scientific method, the European mind excelled in natural, geographical and cosmic discoveries. The church from its standpoint of defending the myths and superstitions of the Middle Ages opposed the discoveries in the name of God and sacred. In fact the church moved to protect its own interests-----

interests that were closely associated with the environment of the Middle Ages. As a result the men of science moved away from the religious domain and its spiritual mysteries so that their science was set apart from the absolute. Qutb thus blames the church for driving the men of science away from God. In the light of this polarization between science and religion in the west, Qutb investigates three major issues in the life of man in this work. These issues are (1) man's nature and temperament (2) gender issues and (3) the question of social and economic systems.<sup>48</sup> As far as the issue of man's nature and temperament is concerned, the author has proved through the quotes of several modern thinkers that Darwinism is superfluous and baseless; it demotes man from the privileged status divinely assigned to him, and reduces him to an animal. According to Qutb man is a unique creation in this universe created for a purpose and with an aim. He enjoys a particular nature that stands above the nature of other animals and that enables him to fulfill functions no animal may fulfill. As a result, he enjoys a noble status equaling the nobility of his mission.

As far as the second issue of gender is concerned, the author holds that the inconveniences and the anxieties arising from a wrong notion regarding women and the relation between two sexes are no less than the anxieties and inconveniences arising from a wrong notion regarding the nature and temperament of man. Then the author delineates the position and status of woman in the light of Qur'ānic teachings and states the guiding principles of mutual relationship between the sexes. He goes on to criticize the position held by women in ancient civilizations, rejects the excessively otherworldly thought of the Christian Rabbis and at the same time attacks the modern western thought of consumerism. He makes it clear that the influence of Roman thought and civilization on the West can be easily discerned. In a nutshell, Qutb articulates a particular concern on the issue of gender differences in this work. It is the animalistic or materialistic reductionism of the modern civilization that leads to a blurring of the divinely ordained differences between the male and the female.

While the male and the female do share in the same humanity, and therefore, stand on the same footing in their respective rights as human beings, they are nonetheless divinely charged with different duties and obligations.

The author throws a critical and quite an investigative light on third big issue of humanity namely, the issue of social and economic system. On the one hand the author has attacked the European capitalist system and on the other hand he has declared the economic interpretation of history to be antagonistic to humanity and has rejected the economic philosophy of Marx, as it is detrimental to humanity. The author holds them as two extremes which formed the basis of capitalism and that of communism. Both these failed to solve the problems of humanity. A system which is based on wrong notions about man and is oblivious of man's reality can not be immune from all these harms. So long as there is a wrong conception about man, his nature, his temperament, his purpose of existence and his sphere of influence, all their relations would remain disoriented and extreme. In particular the social and political relations would remain so because these are directly affected by the conception about man.

In the analysis of the author, the modern civilization is inimical to mankind. But what should be our decision regarding this civilization? Should we declare its end – a punishment commensurate to the crimes it produces? The author's answer is clear. No. Because this civilization did not emerge out of a mere incident rather it emerged in a particular era of history to fulfill the biological needs of man, therefore, its roots are deep and despite triggering horrible crimes against humanity, it is not plausible to declare an end of this civilization.

The only solution is to gain more knowledge of ourselves...But the problem with Carrel, (according to Qutb) is that he is after all a westerner, who grew up in a western culture, and who is therefore, informed by its long history and its prevailing present, a present heavily dominated by the notions of modern science...He is a

prisoner of this culture, its conceptions, its history and the patterns of its life". The solution to this problem, in the eyes of author is Islām; which is not opposed to science but it does not entrust the task of constructing human life to science. Instead, it delineates spheres of intellect and science and prescribes limits for them to act within these limits.

In the words of the author, "Our Islām is not confined to spiritual activities – besides which carrel is not aware of any other dimension – rather Islām makes the whole life its battlefield. It expresses itself in every aspect of life. Islām prescribes the limits of life and it rotates within these limits. Intellect and science, Industry and economy and politics, prayers etc- in short all aspects of human life remain bounded around this orbit of Islām within the limits it prescribes. Islām considers religion to be a code of conduct for human life and it tells that this code is prescribed by God Himself and that His pleasure can be earned by living in accordance with this law or code of conduct". But humanity accepts only that way of life which is manifest in the society. The author ends with a remarkable analysis that "thousands of works written regarding Islām, hundreds of lectures delivered on it in the mosques and in the fields, several films made about the preaching of Islām and numerous delegations dispatched from Azhar etc for preaching Islām – (the fruits of) all such efforts can not be equal to a small society which is established in some part of the world, where Islām is active and which has existed for Islām alone, in which all features of Islām are manifest and in which Islām acquires a practical form of life".

#### **Islāmic Studies (دراسات اسلامية), 1953**

In this book, which is essentially a collection of articles written between 1951 and 1953, Qutb evinces a stronger commitment to the *Al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn* movement. In this work, the author's ideas revolve around such themes as revolution, liberation, Americanization, Arab nationalism and Islām. Elaborating on his notions of social justice, Qutb perceives Islām as a "great emancipator revolution" that led to



far reaching break through in the spiritual, social, economic, military and literary realms of human life. Islām is devoted to freeing the masses from atheism, religious fanaticism, racial and ethnic discrimination, social and economic exploitation and political privileges. However, it is the task of the conscious intellectuals, such as Qutb himself, to raise mass consciousness and elevate the masses to the inevitable conflict between them and their oppressive conditions. Qutb defines Islām as a method of confronting averse and oppressive conditions. The birth of a genuine Muslim takes place in the most critical moments of human history. Indeed, a Muslim is empowered with a special mission to fight injustice.

The author views Islām as a revolutionary religious system that stands against all passive and quietist manifestations of modern life. Once it touches man's heart, Islām is supposed to cause major changes in feelings, perceptions, and conceptions.

The author also comments on what he perceives as the partial and incomplete attempts of Muslim leaders to apply Islām in the realm of education and law. He criticizes these attempts on the premise that Islām is complete and indivisible whole that must be applied in its entirety. He contends that Islām refuses to be consulted in trivial matters while it is neglected when it comes to basic issues.

The author's more general previous criticism of Christianity and the West is narrowed down to a more specific critique of Americanization, its symbols and its intellectual allies in the Muslim lands in this work. In provocative essay entitled "*Americanized Islām*" the author accuses America of being patronizing Islām and Muslims because of its perceived need to combat the communist threat in the Middle East. America does not oppose Islām per se. However, the type of Islām it nurtures is the castrated one.

"The Americans and their allies in the Middle East reject an Islām that resists imperialism and oppression, and opt for an Islām that resists only communism. They neither desire nor tolerate the rule of Islām. This is the case because, when Islām

begins to rule, it will mould the people anew, and instruct them that it is a (legal) duty to both prepare for assuming authority and expelling the colonialists".<sup>49</sup>

The author goes on to argue that "Americanized Muslims" control the most sensitive posts in society, and their decisions are likely to affect the future course of the Muslim world.

"Americanized Muslims" are always ready to render any service, big or small, to their imperialist masters.

In the author's view, the most dangerous of "Americanized Muslims" happen to be certain famous Egyptian authors, journalists and professional men of religion who become aware of the significance which imperialism attaches to their position, and thus subscribe to ideas inimical to Islām.

In another important article entitled, "*The principles of the free world*", the author reacts strongly to claims that the western world is the locus of freedom and equality. "The free world" he maintains, "is just a name that British, French and American colonialists use to describe the imperialist block which has been fighting against (the progress of) time, humanity and freedom". In his view the characteristics which distinguish the so-called free world include (1) killing real freedom in the world; especially in North Africa and Vietnam; (2) committing crimes in Africa in the name of civilizing black people; (3) dislocation of nations and creating permanent refugees, such as in the case of Palestine and (4) pouring millions of dollars into the control of the minds of the indigenous people. The most dangerous thing facing the indigenous people of the third world is the attempt of the western World to brainwash and mind control.

"The free world does not fight us with tanks and guns except for limited periods of time. Instead, it wages a battle against us with tongues and pens....It also fights us though the (charitable) societies and organizations it establishes, revives, and supports for the sake of controlling the most sensitive centers in our land".

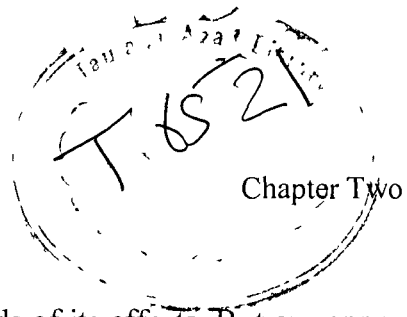
Qutb takes his analysis a step further and develops the concept of “intellectual and spiritual colonialism. This type of colonialism (latent colonialism) drugs out the spirits and minds of the people and turns them into obedient slaves. Revolution is a necessary outcome of colonialism. “Holy war against colonialism today necessitates the emancipation of the conscience of nations from spiritual and intellectual colonialism and the destruction of those systems that drug out the senses and being cautious of any tongue, pen, society and group that concludes a truce with those colonialist camps which are bound by common interests and principles”.<sup>50</sup>

### **Islāmic Concept and its Characteristics (خصائص التصور الإسلامى و مقوماته) 1962:**

This work was first published in 1962. Since then several editions of this work have been published, earning immense popularity. Narrating the reasons for writing this work, the author writes in the preface of this work:

“It is the need of the time to bring out clearly the Islāmic concept and its characteristics and distinctive features because every Muslim ought to know a comprehensive interpretation and explanation of life, in the light of which he would lead his life. It would also enable him to understand God, Universe, mankind and the realities of human life, with which he is deeply associated. What is the central place of man in this Universe? What is the purpose of his existence? Why has been he made nobler to other creatures? He ought to know the answers of all these questions so that after understanding the relationship between the creator and the created, man fulfils his mission”.

The moment a Muslim learns the disposition and nature of Islāmic concept, its characteristics and distinctive features , he would become a sound element in the construction and revival of the *Ummah*, which would have the capability of guiding the humanity and taking it out of the depth of infamy, because it is this ideological concept which drives humanity towards a particular system, it is on the basis of this ideological concept that individual and social activities are performed and it is this



ideological concept which leads humanity in all fields of its efforts. But our approach in this research and work should be to benefit from the Qur'ān in the foremost and study that environment and the civilization in which Islām was revealed. We should also be able to comprehend the evils and deviations which spread because of their apathy from divine guidance. No conscious decision should be taken prior to the study of Qur'ān. Instead of moulding Qur'ān into our preconceived thought and scheme, we should try to construct and mould ourselves in the light of Qur'ānic injections.

Secondly, a person who does not have the determination to strive and sacrifice, and does not have the courage to face the challenges in leading an Islāmic life will not benefit completely from the Qur'ān.

In the Chapter, “Adversities and Misguidance Galore” the in-depth analysis of the author leads us to the conclusion that today the complexity of innumerable large faiths, conceptions, philosophies, superstitions, customs, organizations and institutions have blurred and have made it difficult for us to distinguish between truth and falsehood, *Shirk* and *Tawhīd*, and between real and superfluous. It is only the light of Islām that can help us come out of this quagmire of crisis and guide us to truth and thereby guarantee us a success in this World as well as in the Hereafter.

In the subsequent chapters, the author has discussed in detail all the characteristic features of the Islāmic concept one by one. The first and the foremost characteristic of the Islāmic concept, according to the author, is its divine character (ربانية) i.e. it is from Allāh. The code of conduct, being the creation of Allāh, the Creator of the universe, it is free from all human weaknesses and shortcomings. Allāh has made and prescribed it not for any particular community, group, religion or race but for the humanity as a whole.

The second characteristic of this concept is its consistency and firmness (ثبات). Islām is not as weak as to give in to our wishes and inducements (to ensure its

viability). On the contrary it is based on strong, unwavering and firm principles and it is we who are supposed to follow it. It does not, however, disregard the realities and needs of our life at any moment and keeps the doors of *Ijtihad* open for human intellect to cater to the needs of the time without relegating it to back seat.

The third characteristic of Islāmic concept is its comprehensiveness (شمول) and illimitability. The Islāmic concept informs people about their Lord, about “His person” and “His glorious attributes” and about “What pertains to Him alone as distinct from what pertains to His creation”. It also informs (them) concerning the nature of the universe in which they live, its properties and its relation with the Creator” and tells (them) about life and living, informing them concerning their respective sources. Moreover, the Islāmic concept addresses in detail the human condition and provides answers to man’s deepest existential questions.”

The fourth characteristic of the Islāmic concept which the author discusses in this work is the “balance” (توازن) of this concept. In fact the author sees the beauty of Islām in its balance –balance between known and unknown, between spiritual and mundane, or between relations between God and man and above all the balance between the activity and positions of man and the universe. On the one hand Islām emphasizes mankind to strive for earning bread and on the other hand it puts strict restraints on taking to extravagance and luxury. This attribute of “balance” in short, adorns Islāmic teachings concerning all affairs of human life. The Islāmic concept also informs human beings about man, describing his origin and his source, his nature and his characteristics, his place in this existence, the purpose of his existence, his position of servitude to his Lord, and the requirements of this servitude. It follows that Islām because of its comprehensive character, takes interest and interferes in all affairs of human life, religious and mundane or secular, or political and spiritual or concerning war and worship.

The fifth characteristic of Islāmic concept according to Qutb is positive ness (إيجابية) Islām grants man a positive role in this universe. The spirit of Islāmic concept prompts man to action and movement. His action in the system of earth is not of a derived and negative nature. He is basically created as deputy and vicegerent of God.

The author lists the sixth characteristic of Islāmic concept as “realism” (واقعة). The author concedes that the Islāmic teachings are not utopian that have nothing to do with the practical. To him, Islām goes beyond the realm of thought to address both thought and more importantly the practical aspect of human life. In Islām any endeavour to delve in thought is only for the sake of shaping and ameliorating the practical part of life. Qutb notes that Islām provides an opportunity for humanity to benefit and he cites the example of the generation of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) and his companions who availed of this opportunity to the fullest possible extent and thus benefited. In his view, Islām is continuously throwing open this opportunity for humanity. However, humanity can avail of this opportunity as long as it strives for eliminating the corrupt conditions and circumstance in which it is gripped.

Islām does not tolerate and does not allow such corrupt conditions and circumstance to sustain. In place of excess and contempt it wants humanity to return to the middle path of rectitude and guidance, and to their pristine, uncorrupted nature.

The author ends the work with a discussion on the principle of “*Tawhīd*” and its effects on human life. In his view, all the characteristics of Islāmic concept spring from the concept of “*Tawhīd*”. It is this principle of *Tawhīd*, which creates the spirit of action and movement in man, leads him to firmness and consistency, and preserves the comprehensiveness of the Islāmic concept. The characteristic of “balance” of Islāmic concept owes its origin to the principle of ‘*Tawhīd*’. In short all the blessings and benefits of human life proceed from this principle of “*Tawhīd*”.

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- <sup>4</sup> Qutb, Sayyid, *Al-Taswir al Fanni fi al-Qur'ān*, quoted in Fahad, Obaidullah, *Op.cit*, pp. 15-16
- <sup>5</sup> Akhavi, Shahrough *op.cit*, p.400
- <sup>6</sup> Ushama Thameem, "Sayyid Qutb's Literary Criticism: A Brief Study, in *Hamdard Islāmicus*. Vol. XXIX, No.2, 2006, p.52
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- <sup>8</sup> Ibid., p.400
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- <sup>17</sup> Ibid., pp.35-37
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- <sup>25</sup> Ibid., p.54
- <sup>26</sup> Ibid., pp.54-55
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- <sup>35</sup> Ibid., p.181
- <sup>36</sup> Fahad, Obaidullah, op.cit, pp.61-62.
- <sup>37</sup> Qutb, Sayyid, *Social Justice in Islām*, translation John B. Hardie, American Council of Learned Society, Washington D.C, 1953, p.250
- <sup>38</sup> Abu Rabi, M. Ibrahim, op.cit., p.120
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## Chapter Three

# **Sayyid Qutb's Views on Islamization of Knowledge**

## SAYYID QUTB'S VIEWS ON ISLAMIZATION OF KNOWLEDGE

### CONCEPT OF KNOWLEDGE:

Sayyid Qutb's Views on Knowledge reveal a consistent tension between the western epistemology and the truths of Islāmic revelation. This may not be surprising. Like many others in the colonized Muslim World, Qutb's early life was marked by the tension between western influence and Islāmic tradition: the growing influence of secular education, liberalism and nationalism in Egyptian life, and the increasing importance of maintaining an indigenous Islāmic identity as a bulwark against cultural and political encroachment. Qutb's early education in Musha, a village in Asyut, upper Egypt exposed him to both Sufi Mysticism and Qur'ānic triangle at an early age; then Qutb had both memorized the Qur'ān and adopted anti-British nationalist sympathies yet, he was later sent by his father to a 'modern' rather than a traditional religious school. After the nationalist revolution of 1919, Qutb studied at *Dar-al-ulum*, a non religions teachers training institute.<sup>1</sup>

To Qutb Knowledge is “....complete comprehension and interaction with this comprehension in the depths of soul and conscience which is then followed by action in harmony with them”. In other words, Qutb fetches out “three stages of knowledge. The first stage is the state of mind i.e. comprehension, the second stage is interaction i.e. acceptance by soul and conscience and third the spiritual state”.<sup>2</sup> Qutb rejects all claims of man's ability to arrive at truth either through the method of reasoning or by taking recourse to Philosophy. According to him reason in all its manifestations and functions i.e. logic, dialectics, and induction or deduction is not a reliable means for attaining certainty<sup>3</sup> For Qutb the only legitimate function of reason is to serve as a “great and valuable tool” in order to enable us to understand

and enact God's precepts and thus to fulfill the role of God's vicegerent on earth: "This development [of our mind] is connected to man's duty on earth as Allāh's vicegerent and [vicegerency] requires that the creation of man's mind is according to this design because it is the most suitable one for the performance of this role. Man will advance in grasping the laws of matter and exploiting them at the same time that he advances in the knowledge of various aspects of 'man's reality' moving beyond what he had known before. But the secrets of man's existence, the secret of life and death and of his soul, will remain hidden, beyond the scope of his reason because the knowledge of all these things is not necessary for the performance of his basic role".<sup>4</sup> For Qutb reason is the faculty that enables us to think systematically and logically about the parts of the world we can apprehend, that is the realm of practical knowledge, it is also the faculty that enables us to recognize the limits of our own knowledge. In recognizing the limits of reason, we are prepared to acknowledge God's truths as self-evident, as beyond rational proof: "Indeed 'reason' isn't rejected, disregarded or banished from learning through revelation and understanding what it receives; it comprehends what is necessary as well as surrendering to what is beyond its scope. But it can not be the ultimate 'judge'. As long as there is an exact text, the explicit meaning of that text-without any speculation-is the ultimate judge of interpretation. The mind then derives its decisions from the meaning of this explicit text."<sup>5</sup>

Given Qutb's insistence on the limits of human reason, philosophy thus appears both methodologically and epistemologically antagonistic not only to Islām but to the very truths of human existence. Nowhere is this opposition clearer than in modern western philosophy which is distinguished by explicit rather than implicit antagonism to religion.<sup>6</sup> According to him, the result is tantamount to a deification of reason, i.e. the use of reason as a means of

simultaneously expanding and legitimizing the range of human knowledge, thereby discrediting the authority of religious truths: “The hostility of European thought to religion and to the religious approach lies not only in the subjects of study, philosophical systems and schools of thought that were established by European thought, but in the core of this thought, and in the methodology by which it acquires knowledge.”<sup>7</sup> Reason in this way becomes a justification for the completeness of human knowledge. It not only determines how human beings come to know the world but also defines what is worth knowing as that which is knowable to human beings. As a result, Qutb maintains that what is now considered worthwhile knowledge is only the knowledge of worldly phenomena; we have ceased even to acknowledge the unseen world, the source of real truth. The result is a truncated concept of the world.

Whereas *Milestones* reveals Qutb’s outrage at the arrogance of human claims to knowledge and the usurpation of God’s rightful authority, in the ‘*Islāmic concept and its characteristics*’ there is a sub-text of ‘pain’ in Qutb’s critique of philosophy. Here Qutb suggests that there is something besides transgression at stake; the ascendance of philosophy also represents a profound loss. For, although humans can not wholly grasp either God’s existence or His plan, the eclipse of religious meaning deprives humanity of the only spark of true knowledge available.

Unlike rationalist philosophy in which the development of nature and existence is reduced to scientific theories of causality, competition and chance, Qutb argues that religious truths (Islāmic truths) contain the meanings for which human beings by nature yearn; it answers the important questions in life; Who is man? Where does he come from and why? And where does he go to after this life? Islām also answers all the questions that relate to the existence

and goals of mankind: “The Muslim realizes that his existence on earth is neither unplanned nor transitory; rather, it is foreordained and destined, his path planned, his existence designed with purpose. He has come into being in this world in order to act and work for his own sake and for the sake of others around him-----and he can not show his gratitude to God for the blessing of his existence and his true faith, nor can he hope for liberation from God’s appraisal and punishment, unless he fulfills his positive role as God’s vicegerent on earth”.<sup>8</sup>

The insistence on the inclusion of the intellectual, spiritual as well as material aspects of life in the definition of knowledge, on the part of Qutb is the result of his belief in the concept of the unity of universe. The universe, according to him, is a unity composed of the visible known and the invisible unknown. Life is a unity of material and spiritual energies whose separation results in imbalance and disturbance. Accordingly if this is what the universe is made of, true knowledge has to include all these aspects, whether spiritual or material. Any system of knowledge that advocates separation or compartmentalization of various aspects of life or emphasizes some aspects at the expense of others is rejected by Qutb. Thus for instance, “distorted Christianity which looks at him (man) only through his spiritual yearning and Communism which looks at him only through his material needs” are rejected by Qutb. He argues that Islām views man as a unity in which spiritual yearnings and material needs are inseparable. What marks the superiority of religion (Islām), according to Qutb is its totality.<sup>9</sup>

Unlike the distorted Christianity, Islām recognizes man’s material needs and takes it into account in its World-Conception. This theme is articulated by Qutb since writing *Social Justice in Islām*. In this work Qutb writes that “Islām’s aim is to unite heaven and earth in one world; to join the present

world and the world to come in one faith, to link spirit and body in a single humanity, to correlate worship and work in one life.”<sup>10</sup> The Christian rejection of material luxuries is only part of the divine message, and although Islām also teaches that “the needs of life are not permanent under all circumstances, nor do material necessities always outweigh man’s final destiny” nevertheless “at most time’s man must submit to their demands”. For, it is God who created life; all of life, its spirituality as well as its material dimension and “He did not create it for no purpose nor did He create it for man to neglect it and to check its growth”.<sup>11</sup>

To Qutb, science too is not reliable because of its changing orientations. What was considered to be certain a hundred years back is now rejected as unscientific.<sup>12</sup>

In short, Qutb exudes immense faith in religion and more specifically in the Islāmic revelation as the only reliable source of true knowledge. He challenged those Islāmic thinkers who had sought to reconcile reason and revelation. Mawdudi had insisted that “instead of claiming that Islām is truly reasonable, one should hold that true reason is Islāmic”.<sup>13</sup> Qutb follows Mawdudi’s lead in *Milestones* thus: “He who feels a need to defend, justify and apologize is not capable of presenting Islām to people. Indeed, he is one who lives in *Jāhilīyah*, a life that is hollow, full of contradictions, defects and flaws. This is one who in fact, wants to search for justifications for *Jāhilīyah* he is in. These are the people who attack Islām, forcing some of its adherents---who are ignorant of its true nature---to defend it, as if Islām somehow stood accused, in need of defending itself, like a prisoner on trial”.<sup>14</sup>

#### **Science:**

As far as the pure or abstract sciences such as astronomy, biology, chemistry, and physics-----are concerned, one can discern dichotomous views

of Qutb regarding their nature in *Social Justice in Islām* and the *Milestones*. In *Social Justice in Islām*, science and culture are, tightly coupled, so that each influences the other and fundamentally shapes its essence and character. In *Milestones* on the other hand, science is divorced from the culture and elevated above the realm of history. In *Social Justice in Islām*, modern science is perceived by Qutb as primarily the fruit of modern Europe. However, in the *Islāmic Concept and its Characteristic*, in the *Milestones*, in *This Religion of Islām* and, in *Islām the Religion of Future* Qutb insists on the Islāmic origins of science. In *This Religion of Islām* he expresses a strong belief that the impact of the birth of Islām and its subsequent propagation on history of humanity is unparalleled. “This Universal Phenomenon which manifested itself on the planet earth, namely the religion of Islām did not leave unvisited a single aspect of human life, and although its influence may differ in degree of intensity”; it remains a “reality-----not to be doubted that every single one of the great movements of history derived, directly or indirectly from that momentous happening or to be more precise from that Universal Phenomenon”.<sup>15</sup> The renaissance also owes its existence to the world of Islām, as do “the destruction of the feudal system-----the movement of equality and rights of man which appeared in the *Magna Carta*\* in England and the French revolution”. But most significantly European civilization owes to Islām the very foundation “on which is based the scientific glory of Europe”, the “experimental method”. Qutb notes, it was through the Universities of Andalusia (Spain) that Europe imported experimental science, a science fundamentally different from the Greek science with which it was familiar.<sup>16</sup> In *Islām the Religion of Future* Qutb writes: “In fact it was Islām, by virtue of its realistic system that initiated the inductive or experimental school which was

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\* English great charter, the charter of English liberties granted by King John in 1215 AD under threat of civil war and reissued with alterations in 1216, 1217 and 1225 AD.

started in Andalusia. The experimental or scientific method was then transferred to Europe where Roger and Francis Bacon, falsely alleged to be the fathers of this school, established this doctrine”.<sup>17</sup> The Islāmic origin of science is also another old argument that Qutb inherited from the reformist debate. Rashid Rida\* (AD 1865-1935) proudly insisted on the Islāmic origins of European civilization. “Some fair minded European scholars and intellectuals,” he wrote in his *Al-Manar*, “had admitted that the beginning of modern European civilization had been a consequence of what the Europeans acquired from Islām in Spain at the hands of Ibn-Sina (AD 980-1037)\*\* and his disciples, and during their wars against the Muslims”.<sup>18</sup> Earlier Jamal-ad-Din al-Afgani\*\*\* (AD 1839-1897) also explicitly articulated within the modern context, the centrality of the Islāmic contribution to modern science as Europe and the world had come to know of it.<sup>19</sup> To Qutb, Islām was both the historical and essential inspiration of the scientific spirit. Not only does he state that much of the western science originated in Islāmic Universities prior to European ascendancy but he also regards the pursuit of material progress as a divine command, since such prosperity is a prerequisite for social justice and a condition of human vicegerency. The practical sense in which humans are vicegerents of God is their control over the earth and all its resources or what Qutb also refers to as “managing the affairs of earth”. He argues that the pursuit of such knowledge does not entail a challenge to the fundamental concepts of Islāmic belief. Moreover, he argues that indeed all physical sciences lead towards Allāh, provided they remain within the bounds of natural experiments and do not attempt philosophical speculations that render human

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\* Most prominent disciple of Muhammed Abduhu and one of the most influential scholars and jurists of his generation, best known for his *al-Manar*, a journal comprising Quranic commentary and opinions on pressing legal, political and social issues of the day

\*\* Abu Ali al-Husayn ibn ‘Abdullah ibn Sina, Persian physician, and the most influential philosopher-scientist among the Muslims

\*\*\* One of the most influential reformers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century commonly viewed as the chief ideologue of Pan Islāmism



history and the Universe devoid of divinity. Qutb thus embraces science and technology, provided they are confined to the study and mastery of material world.<sup>20</sup>

In addition to exhorting him to enjoy his life on earth and to fulfill his material needs and necessities, Islām is careful to address man in a language he can grasp without difficulty, a language that is clear and simple to understand and free from complicated and improbable mystifications. For Qutb, two of the most distinguishing characteristics of Islām when compared to other religions are its purity and its simplicity. Divinely ordained Islām is pure in its sources and draws its guidance only from the Creator. Targeting human *fitrah* and recognizing the limited nature of man's capacities, Islām addresses the human in a simple language and seeks to engage his intellectual abilities and his capacity to understand. Islām's convictions are so simple and so clear that they appeal to human understanding. Islām also eschews the miraculous and prefers the fostering of belief through mundane exhortation and everyday action. The example of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and the "first generation of Muslims" is repeatedly invoked by Qutb to underscore the importance in Islām of instilling belief through the active and conscious involvement of man. The Prophet for instance "did not dazzle them with any claim to mysterious power, to superhuman privileges of unseen origin".<sup>21</sup> He presented humankind with a "religion which did not depend for its proof on wonders and miracles, which did not rely on strange events for the very heart of its message, but which relied rather on the examination and scrutiny of the evidence of life itself and its facts".<sup>22</sup> For Qutb, it appears crucial to argue for the achievement of the "unique first generation of Muslims"-though unique in the history of mankind, it was not the result of a miraculous, divine intervention, but the fruit of human effort. This point is important for Qutb, since it is the first step in his larger

argument that it is, and has always been within the power of the Muslim community to alter its present state for the better, and that the secret to bringing about change lies in the active involvement of lay Muslims in the amelioration of their prevailing conditions. Qutb's emphasis on the non-miraculous nature of Islām was motivated by his ultimate argument for an "active Islāmic conception." It is the very nature of the Islāmic concept, Qutb holds, to encourage and urge the human being to do something positive and productive, because according to the Islāmic concept man is an active agent and not a passive recipient of this earth".<sup>23</sup> Man is the vicegerent of God on earth and is obligated to discharge the duty with which God has charged him. Commensurate with this position, God the Merciful has given him the power to comprehend the world and manipulate matter and discover the laws of nature he laid down. Further Qutb argues that the realization of Islāmic order rests on the shoulders of the Muslim believer. "Islām is a divinely ordained faith but its realization in the life of mankind depends on the exertions of men themselves, within the limits of their human capacities and the material realities of human existence in a given environment".<sup>24</sup> Engaging in the material exploration of the earth is not only necessary for survival, but is a religious obligation that man owes to his Creator. Man's vicegerency of God is a "permanent reality" and its manifestation takes on a variety of forms, from the most mundane to the most technologically advanced. It is expressed when man tills the land to produce food and it is expressed when man smashes the atom or sends satellites into space to investigate the earth's atmosphere or other planets. All such activities from one end of the spectrum to the other, as well as whatever may come in the future are various expressions of man's vicegerency on this earth.<sup>25</sup> Qutb reiterates a position already articulated in its essence by Rashid Rida. Rida argued that the acquisition of technical knowledge was a "religious duty".

Preoccupied as he was with the colonial condition of most Muslims in his time, Rida bemoaned the weakness of the Muslims and their utter inability to resist the heathen invading West; they stood powerless in the face of aggression and unable to carry out the religious duty of defending their faith- that is, waging a *jihad* in the way of Allāh. Rida saw in the acquisition of scientific and technological skills a way to develop the strength that would allow Muslims to confront the invader and chase him out of the House of Islām, and therefore, a means to enable them to carry out their *Jihad* duty.<sup>26</sup> Qutb also perceived the acquisition of science as a means to acquire power; but while Rida's invocation of the sciences seems to have been motivated primarily from a utilitarian impulse, Qutb's argument is more deeply grounded in a comprehensive theory that seeks more than just the rehabilitation of a weak Muslim *Ummah*.

#### **Humanities and Social Sciences:**

Qutb is quite explicit in highlighting the non Islāmic or what he considers to be the *Jāhilī* character of the social sciences and humanities. He goes on to list the number of subjects among the social sciences, which are heavily loaded with *Jāhilī* influences in his *Milestones*. According to him, "philosophy, the interpretation of history, psychology (except for those observations and experimental results which are not part of anyone's opinion), ethics, theology and comparative religion, sociology (excluding statistics and observations)-all these sciences have a direction which in the past or present has been influenced by *Jāhilī* beliefs and traditions. That is why all these sciences come into conflict, explicitly or implicitly with the fundamentals of any religion, and especially with Islām."<sup>27</sup>

It is important to note that Qutb deems unobjectionable statistically based analysis of society. In fact, Qutb himself in many instances in his writings does refer to statistical result of social studies.

Qutb, writing in a time when “western” curriculum, that included the new disciplines of the social sciences and humanities, had made inroads into mid-century Egyptian universities, expressed a deep concern over the un-Islāmic character of these disciplines. Such concern was only vaguely expressed by his predecessors, Jamal-ad-din al-Afgani, Muhammad Abduh\* (AD 1849-1905) and Rashid Rida.<sup>28</sup> To Qutb, the humanities and social sciences do not recognize the privileged status of man in the world (as the vicegerent of God) but reduce man to animal or worse, to mere matter; they do not acknowledge the existence of a conscious active God. The god offered by the humanities and social sciences is an abstraction at best if not an outright absurdity; and through the ideas and systems they propose and conceptualize, they undermine the Islāmic conception and work to promote *Jāhiliyah* and quell any attempt at establishing the Islāmic order. Qutb asserts that Muslims should reject them as source of Knowledge for the simple reason that they have failed to deliver on their epistemological promises. As mentioned in the discussion on the natural sciences, Qutb argues that man’s mission is well defined by God: man is to act as God’s caretaker on earth. God has created man with an immutable *fitrah* and has charged him with a clear mission. To act in violation of that *fitrah* or to transgress beyond the bounds of that mission is to invite misery and disaster. Man can never hope to unravel the nature of his own *fitrah* for the simple reason that it is part of his *fitrah* that he remain ignorant of its nature. Unlike other creatures, man needs to believe in what transcends him and in what he can never fully understand; he needs a creed “*aqeedah*” just as he needs to eat and drink. God has provided man with the tools to explore and understand the world, and has laid out a blueprint that both outlines for him a framework within which to organize his life, and at the same

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\* Religious scholar, jurist and liberal reformer, who led the late 19<sup>th</sup> century movement in Egypt and other Muslim countries to revitalize Islāmic teachings and institutions in the modern world.

time address his eternal existential questions about the world, his position within it and his relationship with his past, his future and what surrounds him. Surely Allāh the Most High, the fashioner of the human being, knows the nature and extent of human faculties. He knows what capability man has been given to understand the laws of the physical universe and to control the forces of nature in order to carry out the tasks of his vicegerency on earth, just as He also knows what is concealed from man on the secrets of life i.e. what are his body and brain, how they came about and how they function and the secret of his mind or soul or of his spirit. Even the connection between his intellectual and spiritual functions and his bodily functions is to a large extent still unknown to him.<sup>29</sup> Only God has access to the ‘Hows’ of creation for, “How” is the connection between what He Wills and the way it comes into being, i.e. the connection between Willing and originating. The ‘Hows’ are beyond human comprehension. The Islāmic conception suggests that we leave such matters to the one with absolute knowledge and absolute power of planning---<sup>30</sup> It would be a folly, Qutb argues, for man to attempt to undertake the task of unraveling such mysteries. Would man dare manipulate matter, Qutb asks rhetorically, if he were in total ignorance of what he had in his hands? If he did, the result would be an assured “self-destruction”. The “exact same situation” now holds with spiritual and moral questions. Man is daring to delve into these questions when his ignorance is nearly total of the subject matter he wishes to investigate. Citing his own experience, Qutb writes: “The person who is writing these lines has spent forty years of his life reading books and in research in almost all aspects of human knowledge. He specialized in some branches of human knowledge and studied other due to personal interest. Then he turned to the fountainhead of his faith. He came to know that what ever he had read so far was as nothing in comparison to what he found here”.<sup>31</sup>

### PERCEPTION OF ISLĀMIZATION:

In *Social Justice in Islām*, Qutb proposes that the twin Pillars upon which a lasting “renaissance of Islāmic life can be effected” are the establishment of Islāmic “Law and Statute” and the fostering of a social system that draws its life-conception from “Islāmic philosophy”.<sup>32</sup> He goes on to write that “the natural method of establishing that philosophy is by education”.<sup>33</sup> But a dilemma at once emerges. The prevailing “educational methods and modes of thought are essentially western and inimical to the Islāmic philosophy itself”; so that the very attempt to establish Islāmic world view in practice frustrates the project of Islāmic purification. It may be pointed out here that to Qutb true Islāmic philosophy is to be found in the holy Qur’ān rather than in the writings of Ibn Sina, Ibn Rushd etc. Qutb argues that “western educational methods” owing to their materialistic basis are contrary to Islāmic theory of life. Secondly being the products of *Jāhilī* system, these methods by their very nature are opposed to the Islāmic concept “no matter whether such opposition is manifest or concealed in various forms”. The challenge, therefore, is to “choose the ways of native Islāmic thought, in order to ensure pure results, without adopting a position of isolationism in regard to thought, education and science.”<sup>34</sup> Qutb’s answer to his own dilemma is ambiguous and somewhat self-contradictory. On the one hand he asserts that “thought, education and science-----are a common heritage of all the peoples of the World, in which we among the foremost have a fundamental part”.<sup>35</sup> He goes on to assert even more forcefully: “In the case of the pure sciences and their applied results of all kinds, we must not hesitate to utilize all things in the sphere of material life; our use of them should be unhampered and unconditional, unhesitating and unimpeded.”<sup>36</sup> And yet a few lines later Qutb admits that “the experimental method rests on the basis of a definite philosophy which is neither intellectual

nor spiritual; if this had never established itself in favour, science would never have followed the course which latterly it has taken. In the same way, science can never remain in isolation from philosophy nor can it be content to be influenced by Philosophy without in turn influencing it. For, philosophy benefits by the experimental results of science, and is influenced by it in aim and method. Thus a study of pure science involves a study of philosophy which is influenced by that science and which in turn exerts an influence on it. All this is over and above the fact that the applied results of science must influence all material life, methods of gaining a living and the division of wealth. All this will in due time produce new forms of society based on new philosophy which must be influenced by these developments in the course of life".<sup>37</sup> Qutb's Islāmization programme appears more specific in the *Milestones*. The basic leitmotif throughout the *Milestones* is precisely that everything must be fundamentally altered to conform to the Islāmic ideal. In this work, the line between the *Jāhilī* and the Islāmic is sharp and well defined, and the possibility of mingling the *Jāhilī* and Islāmic World conceptions is outright eliminated. "The function of this divine system which is given to us-the callers to Islām---- is to provide a certain style of thinking, purified from all those *Jāhilī* styles of thinking which are current in the World and which have poisoned our culture by depriving us from our own mind."<sup>38</sup>

#### **Islāmization of pure Sciences:**

As mentioned earlier, Qutb expresses somewhat contrasting views about the origin of modern science in his works *Social Justice in Islām* on the one hand and *Milestones, Islāmic concept and its Characteristics, This Religion of Islām*, and *Islām the Religion of Future* on the other. In *Social Justice in Islām*, modern science is perceived by Qutb as primarily the fruit of modern Europe. However, in the *Islāmic Concept and its Characteristics* and in *Milestones*

Qutb insists on the Islāmic origins of science. It was the Islāmic Concept (*Tasawwur*) that crucially reoriented scientific investigation from its Greek obsession with abstract theory to its present day focus on experimental investigation. In *Social Justice in Islām*, Qutb views modern science primarily as the achievement of the western civilization and the product, in the form that it has come to assume, of western culture. Having granted the culturally tainted character and at the same time having insisted that the acquisition of science is not only desirable but also crucial for the very survival of the Muslims, Qutb has no choice but to accept compromise: “what must be must be” is his conclusion since “there is no possibility of living in isolation from science and its products, though the harm it does may be greater than the good.”<sup>39</sup> In contrast to this, the position adopted by Qutb in the “*Milestones*” is bolder. Here he argues that true science is culturally neutral while the benefits of that science are an unmixed blessing, if they are learned within the divine conception of life. Ironically, Qutb’s bolder position is acquired at the cost of hedging on one of the most fundamental points of “*Milestones*”: the essential incompatibility of the *Jāhilī* and the Islāmic life conceptions. “Islām considers that-----there are two kinds of culture; the Islāmic culture and the *Jāhilī* culture” Qutb writes, “excluding the abstract sciences and their practical applications.”<sup>40</sup> This is a remarkable concession given Qutb’s incessant insistence that *Jāhilīyah* and Islām can have nothing in common. Equally noteworthy is his belief that science is essentially good and necessary for the wellbeing of humanity. As already mentioned, Qutb also argues that scientific activity or learning of science is a part of man’s duty on earth. Islām does not look with contempt at the material progress and material inventions; in fact, it considers them when used under the divine system of life as God’s gifts and also Islām recognizes Muslims as “vicegerents of God on earth and makes them responsible for



learning all sciences and developing various capabilities to fulfill this high position which God has granted them”.<sup>41</sup> Further, these “abstract sciences” according to Qutb are not related to the basic concept of a Muslim about life, universe, and man, the purpose of his creation, his responsibilities and his relationship with the physical world and with the Creator. In other words, they do not transgress into “metaphysical questions that touch on the life conception”.<sup>42</sup> It is interesting to note that Qutb’s acceptance of the “neutrality” of the “abstract sciences” is close to that of Mawdudi. As Seyed Vali Reza Nasr notes “to debate effectively with modernity Mawdudi had to accept many modernist assumptions especially those involving scientific truths, which he saw as value neutral”.<sup>43</sup> Not that he believed that science in the Islāmic order would remain value neutral, Mawdudi seems to have held the equivocal view that science, although value neutral upon its acquisition, could be infused with the Islāmic spirit once acquired by Muslims: “even a bulldozer or computer would be Islāmic if used in the path of God”.<sup>44</sup> An important practical consequence for Qutb of the metaphysical neutrality of the sciences is that Muslims may learn those sciences from non-Muslims, should there be no Muslims available to them. “No doubt Islām permits a Muslim to learn chemistry, physics, astronomy, medicine...and similar technical sciences from a non-Muslim or from a Muslim who is not pious”.<sup>45</sup> Qutb quite clearly does at times hedge on the extent of the life-conceptual neutrality of the sciences. When pure and unmingled with *Jāhili* conception, “all these sciences lead man towards God, unless they are perverted by personal opinions and speculations, and presented devoid of the concept of God”.<sup>46</sup> But in the case of Europe’s “regrettable situation”- that is, its “unfortunate” history of strife and animosity between an encroaching and tyrannical Church and the civil order-“all sciences turned against religion, whether they were speculative philosophy or technical

or abstract sciences having nothing to do with religion”.<sup>47</sup> Consequently, “the western ways of thought,” he goes on, “and the sciences started on the foundation of these poisonous influences with an enmity towards all religions, and in particular with greater hostility towards Islām”. Therefore, while learning their sciences, Muslims must “remain on guard and keep these sciences away from philosophical speculations, as these philosophical speculations are generally against religion and in particular against Islām. A slight influence from them can pollute the clear spring of Islām”.<sup>48</sup>

### **Islāmization of Social sciences and Humanities**

Qutb exhibits an extremely cautious attitude towards the western humanities and social sciences. He asserts that these disciplines must not be taken seriously as a source of knowledge on the grounds of their failure to deliver on their original epistemological promises. According to him, rather than leading to a greater understanding about man, these disciplines have created more confusion and bewilderment. Consequently, the social systems which are erected on the basis of these disciplines are unbalanced, more abstract and theoretical than realistic, triggering moral and psychological inconveniences in their own members. Qutb's doctrinal antipathy towards the western humanities and social sciences can be better understood in the light of his contention that western humanities and social sciences: (A) challenge the humanity of man B; negate the divinity of Allāh and C; undermine the Islāmic conception,

#### **Humanity of man is challenged:**

What distinguishes man from the rest of the creation according to Qutb, is that he is an agent in possession of a will and has the capacity to inform his action with belief. These capacities that man enjoys, according to Qutb have been granted to him by God so that he may fulfill his mission as God's vicegerent. The humanities and the social sciences, regardless the differences

that may internally differentiate schools and philosophies, represent for Qutb a gravely misguided and arrogant attempt to fundamentally redefine man. In this attempt at redefinition, man is no longer an agent in possession of a will and capable of acting and believing, but mere matter, outside the process of making history and completely subservient to its allegedly irresistible forces and patterns. Mistakenly applying the methods of the natural sciences on man, and therefore, treating him as a passive datum, the humanities and social sciences cannot resist in the final analysis to collapse man to an inanimate matter. As a result, any social system that bases its conception of life on ideas derived from the humanities and the social sciences will deal a deadly blow to human dignity and at the same time discard human agency from participating in the process of conceptualizing and building society. The most manifest consequences of such a redefinition of man, in Qutb's view, is the inhumanity perpetrated against man in the name of some man-made ideology or another and the rise of an unprecedented breed of totalitarianism. Qutb's recurrent example of a man-made system that does great violence to human dignity and at the same time subtracts man from the process of history is communism. Communism violates the integrity of man, first, by stipulating that society is structured around classes. The proletariat class is elevated to the role of history maker and is pitted against the other putatively retrogressive classes. The effect of this conception of society and of the relationship that obtains between its members is to breed within the proletariat the "emotion of.....hatred and envy of other classes" so that "such a selfish and vengeful society cannot but excite base emotions in its individuals". But much more devastating to human dignity than the cultivation of base emotions is the total reduction of man to mere matter. In *Islāmic Concept and its Characteristics*, Qutb writes: In the formulation of Karl Marx (AD 1818-1883), the material world, in the form of economic

activity, became the creator of morals, manners, minds, religions, and philosophies. In comparison with these gods of material order and economic force, an individual human being is worth very little, because he is a passive recipient and his mental activity is merely secondary by-product of matter.<sup>49</sup> Reduced to matter, man is no longer a shaper of history but a product of mysteries and yet, ironically, mundane forces that elude his control. Far from occupying his divinely ordained elevated status, “man’s scope” is confined “within the mouse-hole of the factories of production.”

Whether by reducing man to mere matter or by superseding human conscious agency by supra-human forces, the models of man, reality and change presented by the social sciences and the humanities all suffer from one important flaw: they all demote man from the privileged status divinely assigned to him. Darwin (AD 1809-1882), Freud\* (AD 1856-1939) and Marx are time and again singled out by Qutb as the original sinners on this score: “their ideas and directives are all founded on the impulse to belittle man in various ways: by reducing him to an animal, as Darwin did, by arguing that all his actions are motivated by crude sexual energy, as Freud argued, by asserting his passivity in the face of economic and material factors, as Karl Marx proposed”.<sup>50</sup> Such propositions, Qutb insists, fundamentally negate a central thesis in the Islāmic conception: the unique and privileged position that God has granted man. Man is no mere animal, Qutb writes. Man is a unique creation in this universe, created for a purpose and with an aim. He enjoys a particular nature that stands above the nature of animals and that enables him to fulfill functions no animal may fulfill. As a result, he enjoys a noble status equaling the nobility of his mission. Thus he was when he was originally created, thus he is now, and thus he shall remain tomorrow. And those who have

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\* Austrian Neurologist, founder of Psychoanalysis.

contradicted this reality now find themselves compelled to accept it. But more than challenging the nobility of man as a unique and privileged creature, non-divinely inspired social systems negate also the uniqueness of the individual: “every member of humanity is a unique individual, unlike any other individual in existence”, for he has his own characteristics that distinguish him for all other human beings and that set him apart as truly unique. All human beings share the same attribute of humanity, but each enjoys his own particular identity.<sup>51</sup>

Taking these two “realities” about man as a given--- that man is a unique creature unlike any other, and that each human being is unique and different from any other human being, Qutb argues that any social system that aspires to guarantee the happiness of the members of its society must devise institutions that ensure the nobility of man and respect his individuality. Qutb sees no conflict between ensuring, on the one hand the humanity and individuality of workers, and on the other, promoting the productivity of work. Once the humanity and individuality of the worker are respected, Qutb claims that “engineers and managers will not find it difficult to devise a labour system that fosters these two desiderata which at the same time, thanks to technology, guarantees great productivity”. According to him, “a society’s economic, social and political systems, and the conditions of labour that prevail within its factories and elsewhere, should keep in mind, first, the characteristic of humanity, and second, the characteristic of individuality . Workers should not be treated as a herd of sheep, nor should any individual worker be regarded as a mere machine.”<sup>52</sup> The negation of individuality represents for Qutb an “outrageous catastrophe” caused by systems of life erected by man. Individuality, Qutb writes, is a “fundamental characteristic in the biological constitution of man, and, therefore, in his intellectual and psychological make

up. A system that cultivates this individuality to its maximum potential, with an eye towards promoting the greater good, is a system that is compatible with human *fitrah*".<sup>53</sup> Qutb's preoccupation with the totalitarian central state is obvious when he writes that a system which "suppresses and kills individuality in various ways and manners....is a system that is working towards the total destruction of the human organism".<sup>54</sup> Qutb points in particular to social systems that adopt an economic structure "where everything is in the hands of the state, and where – in addition to political and judicial monopoly- all resources and means of production are under its control..." In such social systems, Qutb writes, the state is "the sole entrepreneur that sells to, and buys from, individuals. It is the only thinker, for it neither tolerates dissent nor allows debate over the principles, the ideas and the means of the state".<sup>55</sup>

#### Divinity of Allāh is negated:

For Qutb, the social sciences and humanities project a negative notion of God as against the only true and positive notion projected by the Islāmic conception. As against the Active, Conscious, Omniscient, Omnipotent ....God of the Islāmic conception, the god described in social sciences and humanities corresponds to mere material (according to Marx), or to sex (according Freud) or to absolute idea (according to Hegel\*) and so on.

Qutb's rejection of the humanities and the social sciences, and especially "western philosophy" on grounds that these disciplines violate the Islāmic conception of divinity, is most explicitly articulated in the *Islāmic concept and its characteristics*. The god depicted by the philosophers, Qutb explains, is an absurd and pathetic entity, and a telling example of the worst that idle intellectualism is capable of thinking up. "A vast difference separates the Islāmic concept of Allāh and the concept of god presented by such

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\* G W F Hegel (AD 1770-1831), German idealist philosopher who developed a dialectical scheme that emphasized the progress of history and ideas from thesis to antithesis and thence to higher synthesis.

philosophers as Plato (BC 427-347), Aristotle (BC 384-322), and Plotinus\* (AD 205-270)". They describe an "abstract" god, which is a creation of their intellect and a product of their logic. It is a god without will power and without any action, and this is because of its assumed "perfection".<sup>56</sup>

The god of Aristotle, Qutb complains ironically, is such a perfect entity that he is not even aware of creation but merely contemplates himself. Having posited the perfection of god, Aristotle infers that since a perfect being may not contemplate anything below perfection, therefore, god is capable of beholding nothing else but himself.<sup>57</sup> Such a god, by virtue of his perfection, is also capable of neither action nor will, for action implies desire, and god is beyond desire, while will implies making a choice between two courses, while by definition god is himself the perfect god.<sup>58</sup> Aristotle pursues his notion of god even further, Qutb laments, to arrive at the conclusion that this perfect god was not the creator of the universe: Aristotle made a distinction between the "Necessary Being" and the "possible being". God is the Necessary Being but he is devoid of will and action, and he did not create the universe, nor is he concerned with it. The universe, and whatever and whoever is in it, was a "possible being". Its desire to be like the Necessary Being brought it into "existence" from "non- existence".<sup>59</sup>

Atrophied as the god of Aristotle may have been, the deadliest blow to any concept of a living god was dealt, according to Qutb, by Plotinus: The god of Aristotle was indeed unaware of creation, incapable of action, and stripped of will. But he was aware of at least his own existence. Not so with attributes, and beyond knowledge! The perfection of god meant for Plotinus that it was not possible for god to think of anything, to know anything including himself. And so, "in his view, the only role of the god was to create intelligence. After

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\* Ancient Roman philosopher, regarded by modern scholars as the founder of Neoplatonic School of philosophy.

that there was nothing for him to do!”<sup>60</sup> Hence the god of the philosophers, in Qutb’s view, is an absurd entity, whittled away beyond understanding by the excesses of idle intellectual speculation. Theirs is a “god about whom nothing can be said and who has nothing to do with the real world! Obviously, a purely intellectual approach, bereft of revelation, can succeed only in constructing such a pallid and abstracted God that it can have neither existence nor reality”.<sup>61</sup> In addition to an assault on the ontological status of God, philosophy has also undermined divinity through its more recent conceptions of reality. Reiterating his argument that the present state of spiritual and moral degradation in western society is the result of a reactionary rejection of an erstwhile tyrannical Church—a Church that grew tyrannical precisely as “a direct result of tampering with the revealed religious concept and introducing human distortions into it”—Qutb singles out modern European idealism as an example of a philosophy that aims at undermining the God of the Islāmic conception. Fichte’s\* (AD 1762-1814) and Hegel’s brand of idealism, and, of course, Marx’s dialectical materialism, are given special attention. On Fichte’s idealism, Qutb writes: “Fichte argued that the mind has an existence completely independent of other-than-itself, its existence, its own existence, and not of other-than-itself. There can not be unknowable things in themselves. Knowledge was possible because the mind itself produced the forms of knowledge through its various categories. Thus, every object, including things, is the product of mind. To say otherwise is to admit the existence of the Not-Self, which would contradict the Self, that is to say, the existence of the mind itself”. But, Qutb wonders sarcastically, “Why would the existence of the Not-Self contradict the existence of the Self? Why cannot there be things and objects as well as minds”? Qutb goes on to note that the mind is supreme,

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\* German philosopher and patriot, one of the great transcendental idealists.



“Hegel employed it to establish the reality of the Absolute”.<sup>62</sup> In Hegel’s idealism, Qutb explains, “the idea in its wholeness, the Absolute idea, is eternal and self-existed before the realm of Nature or finite minds came into being. This Absolute idea is what religions refer to as god”. But even as a metaphor, this Absolute idea is not a “Being separate from the world of nature. As [Hegel] puts it, ‘Nature represents the idea outside itself’. That is to say, Nature is the rationality of the idea in external form”. But such abstract idealism, Qutb adds, was not able to take a foothold even within the European context within which it was articulated and developed. European thinkers “quickly abandoned idealism in favor of positivism”. The rejection of Hegelian Idealism, Qutb notes, was indeed the right thing to do. But unfortunately, “the leaders of Positivism, in their revolt against the God of the Church and the godhead of Absolute Idea, did not move toward anything better. They ended by making the phenomenal world, or Nature, their god”. And again, their god suffered from the same shortcomings and contradictions that afflicted the god of the “Absolute Idea.” First, this god was only vaguely and incoherently defined: “Is this some well-defined being? Is it the universe as a whole? Or is it the various things and their shapes and movements?” Second Qutb wonders, what is the relationship between this god of “Nature” and the human being: “Does it have an existence independent of the human concepts concerning it? Or is it what our senses tell us it is?” And if the latter does hold, then what kind of creator depends on his creation to exist? Third, why has this Nature singled out the human being, out of all other animals, to bestow intellect and reason upon him? Why are all other animals without intellect? <sup>63</sup> Fourth, what is this Nature? If it is “matter” then what is “matter”? If it is posited as something permanent, then how can it also be held at the same time matter transforms into energy, and energy back to matter? And “in which of the two

states, mass or energy, does it create the human mind... and at which stage does it impart life and consciousness?" And fifth, "if Nature imprints reality on the human mind; does it imprint the correct reality?" Obviously not Qutb concludes, since was it not the case that "this reality and this mind decided that the earth was the center of the universe, and then again that the earth is but a small planet, moving around the sun"? But "which of these contradictory intellectual judgments are the realities imprinted on the human mind by Nature? Does one observe that makes mistakes in its imprints? Or is it the human mind that makes mistakes".

In addition to an attack on the ontological status of God and the articulation of a conception of reality that substitutes idea and matter for a conscious, living divine agency, a more subtle assault is carried out against God in what Qutb considers to be the immoderate celebration of reason and the relentless devaluation of revelation. Qutb points to the Enlightenment as the historical starting point for such a worldview. By entrusting the mind to solve all of man's problems, the leaders of the Enlightenment were in effect asserting the supremacy of "reason" over all other sources of knowledge, and most importantly over revelation.<sup>64</sup>

#### Islāmic conception is undermined:

As already mentioned a central theme in Qutb's writings is the essential incompatibility between Islāmic and *Jāhiliyyah*. The social sciences and the humanities, Qutb argues, are characterized by a penchant for abstraction and inaction, and invariably lead to theories that strain credulity and common sense; in a word, they are patently un-Islāmic in essence and spirit. But second, and more importantly, to adopt the humanities and the social sciences as sources of knowledge is to place the Islāmic conception in a state of real danger. The Islāmic order and *Jāhiliyyah*, Qutb insists, cannot co-exist within

the same social context nor will they tolerate one another; instead, they are engaged in a continual struggle for supremacy. To accept any knowledge from the humanities and the social sciences is to side with *Jāhiliyyah*. In the momentous struggle between good and evil, the Islāmic conception and its relevance to not only present-day Muslims but to all of humanity is the integrity of the Islāmic spirit. Unlike Judaism and Christianity, Qutb argues, Islām never suffered a corruption that compromised the fundamental principles of the Islāmic conception. Historically, Qutb admits Muslims have deviated and have accepted social orders other than Islām. In *Social justice in Islām*, Qutb argues that after the time of the Prophet and the pious caliphs, Muslims by and large lived under governments that were patently un-Islāmic. In *Milestones*, Qutb broadens the accusation to include society itself: having accepted the rule of the un-Islāmic, (the *Jāhilī*), the self proclaimed Muslim society itself became *Jāhilī*. But in either case, whether in *Social justice's* limited denunciation of government or in *Milestones'* broad brush against Muslim society, Qutb maintains that the "Islāmic conception"- as a set of principles- remained untouched, and therefore, always at the disposal of a new generation of Muslims ready to answer the call of their *fitrah*, ready to believe, and most importantly, ready to act and transform for the better their world and that of their fellow human beings. The humanities and the social sciences represent a great danger precisely because, in Qutb's view, they aim to undermine the very principles of the Islāmic conception - principles that have so far survived and withstood the onslaught of a relentless *Jāhiliyyah*.<sup>65</sup>

Qutb's discourse on Islāmization of knowledge basically revolves around three themes –i). the comprehensiveness of Islāmic concept ii). the non authenticity of humanities and social sciences and iii). the essential incompatibility between these disciplines and Islām. Qutb asserts the

comprehensiveness of Islāmic conception in many of his works. In *Social Justice in Islām*, for instance, Qutb writes that “the principles, ideas, values and criteria” established by Islām “embraced every sector of human life”. On the one hand they embraced the human concept of God and the relation of humanity to Him; the human concept of existence, of the purpose of existence, its general place and function in the universe. On the other hand they deal with political, social and economic rights and duties”. In *Islāmic Concept and its Characteristics*, Qutb devotes a whole chapter to the comprehensiveness (*Shumūl*) of the Islāmic conception of life.

The non authenticity of humanities and social sciences is the result of their transgression into the world of metaphysics, seeking to answer such questions which only God the All-knowing and All-powerful Creator may address and answer.

The incompatibility between these disciplines and the Islāmic conception is explained by Qutb through highlighting the dangers that these disciplines pose to the Islāmic conception. These disciplines, according to him disparage the humanity of man by reducing him from his elevated status of the vicegerent of God to a mere creature; they negate the Divinity of God by creating His substitutes in the form of ‘matter’, ‘absolute idea’ or by giving precedence to reason over revelation. Qutb, however, does not view pure or abstract sciences to be incompatible with the Islāmic conception. On the contrary, he believes in the Islāmic origins of science and concedes that it facilitates man in accomplishing his goals as the vicegerent of God.

The sharp distinction between human and divine that exists in Qutb’s discourse would imply that the transition from non-Islāmic to Islāmic could not be gradual. This entails an evaluation of another, yet more important dimension of Qutb’s discourse namely how to establish an Islāmic society in the world.

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## Chapter Four

# **Islamization of Society**

## ISLĀMIZATION OF SOCIETY

### JĀHILIYYAH

One of the concepts which was vehemently articulated and theorized by Sayyid Qutb is the concept of *Jāhiliyyah*. Throughout the Muslim world he is seen as the most profound theoretician of the concept. *Jāhiliyyah*, a term taken directly from the Qur'ān, specifically refers to the period of pre-Islāmic ignorance in Arabia. This ignorance of the pre-Islāmic Arabs primarily consisted of their refusal to acknowledge the oneness of God or their unawareness of His message or eternal laws.<sup>1</sup>

Prior to Qutb, the term *Jāhiliyyah* was used by Sayyid Abul Ala Mawdudi and Sayyid Qutb Abul Hassan Ali Nadwi as well. Mawdudi described two forms of *Jāhiliyyah* in his work “*Islām and Ignorance*”, (i) that form of *Jāhiliyyah* wherein a person relies exclusively upon his own senses for solving the fundamental problems of his life like what is the purpose of his life? Is he responsible or irresponsible? Is there any superior being that controls this world? And so on. Mawdudi calls this form of ignorance as sheer ignorance. He further asserts that an inevitable consequence of sheer ignorance is that the entire range of human conduct should be unfettered and devoid of any sense of responsibility. (ii) A second form of *Jāhiliyyah* described by Mawdudi is the one wherein a person combines observation with conjecture and speculation to solve such problems of life. Mawdudi explains that three different strains of thought arise out of this form of *Jāhiliyyah* and each strain of thought produces a particular type of behavior.

First is polytheism and the behavior that springs from belief in polytheism is characterized by superstitions, endless cycles of rituals, exploitation and error.

Second is Monasticism which produces a kind of behavior that promotes individualism at the expense of collectivism, causes good men to live a life of hermits, and provides a loophole for despots to extend their tyrannical rule rather smoothly. Monasticism also conflicts with human nature.



The third strain of thought is what is popularly known as the Doctrine of *Wahdat al-Wujud*. This doctrine implies that every thing is God and is ascribed to Muhidin ibn al-Arabi. According to Mawdudi, it inculcates a kind of attitude in man that makes him doubt the reality of his own existence, lose all initiative, consider himself a mere puppet and so on.<sup>2</sup>

Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi talks of *Jāhiliyyah* in his work “*What has the world lost by the decline of Muslims*”? The book primarily seeks to explain the decline of Islām by offering a historical account of its rise, expansion and gradual regression. The author’s depiction of ‘Muslim decadence’ which is seen to have taken place under the Ottomans, is followed by a grim description of the genealogy of western civilization, embracing the Greeks, the Romans, Christianity, materialism, the theory of evolution, nationalism and scientific progress. According to him, ‘Christian Europe’ has become in its entire civilization ‘pagan and materialistic’ (*Jāhiliyyah -Madiyya*). The Muslims have been forced to join in this mad pursuit of materialism turning into ‘mere passengers’ in a train driven by European nations. He however, asserts that the Muslims are essentially immune to outright ‘pagan materialism’, since their spiritual heritage is still ‘preserved in its pristine purity’.<sup>3</sup>

Qutb borrowed this concept mainly from Abul Ala Mawdudi to give it its contemporary meaning as a condition rather than a particular historical period, a state of ignorance into which a society degenerates whenever it deviates from the Islāmic way of life.<sup>4</sup>

It was through the concept of “*Jāhiliyyah*” as a condition, that Qutb analyzed the modern society and sought to expose its ills and deficiencies. This analysis led him to adopt an uncompromising approach as vindicated by his *Milestones*. In this work Qutb classifies the world into black and white. There are the *Jāhili* societies and the Islāmic societies. The former is characterized by an ignorance of God’s guidance (Qur’ān), submission to man made laws and conformation to man made systems of life, while the latter is characterized by a sincere adherence to God’s guidance in all its affairs and His acknowledgement as the only sovereign on earth.<sup>5</sup> In order to fully comprehend the meaning of

*Jāhiliyyah* as conceived by Qutb, it is quite plausible to go back to his understanding of the Qur'ān's account of the beginning of the world. Man was sent by God to establish His (God's) authority on earth as is vindicated by the Qur'ānic verse "God told angels: "I am appointing man as a vicegerent on the earth".<sup>6</sup> Hence man was established as the master of earth and everything created in it is for his benefit. Man has control over the material world; he is its master, not slave. Man was ranked higher than angels because God ordered them to prostrate themselves before Adam.<sup>7</sup> However, one angel who came to be known as *Iblis* or *satan* refused. Therefore *Iblis* was the first non-believer and for Qutb the first promoter of *Jāhiliyyah*. Qutb states that thus began the long struggle between "*iblis*-the epitome of evil and man-God's vicegerent on earth".<sup>8</sup> Man would always win this struggle as long as he follows God's guidance.

Nonetheless, man soon lost the first battle with *Iblis* by disobeying God's guidance to not go close to a particular tree"<sup>9</sup> As a consequence to this disobedience, both man and *Iblis* were ordered to descend from paradise to earth by God. However God made a significant declaration "Guidance shall reach you from Me. Those who follow My guidance shall have nothing to fear, nor shall they grieve, but those who deny and gainsay Our revelations, shall have the fire wherein they shall abide".<sup>10</sup>

God forgave man for his first choice of *Jāhiliyyah*, but send him to earth and reminded him that divine guidance will come. God firmly commands man to follow His divine guidance lest he shall suffer. In this way man's authority on earth was never intended to be separated from God. Without God's guidance man loses authority and legitimacy as a ruler on earth. By ignoring God's guidance, he rebels against God's sovereignty on earth. Further, he loses his ability to live harmoniously on earth.<sup>11</sup>

Qutb, like other devout Muslims believes that Muhammad (S.A.W) was sent as a final messenger of God's divine guidance in the form of Qur'ān. The Qur'ān is God's final guide for man to live a full and harmonious life that is in accordance with his nature. Those who ignore it are guilty of *Jāhiliyyah*.

Throughout human history men have disobeyed God. But God sent messengers from time to time to mankind whenever they fell into the state of *Jāhiliyyah*. In short, *Jāhiliyyah* results whenever man ignores the divine commands given by God's messengers. Thus for Qutb, *Jāhiliyyah* is not a period of time, rather it is a condition that is repeated every time society swerves from the Islāmic way whether in the past, the present or future.<sup>12</sup> The difference between the historical *Jāhiliyyah* and the one prevailing in the world today is that the latter is more sinister since it is created willfully by men who usurp the role of God. The older *Jāhiliyyah* was based on ignorance, naiveté and youth, but the contemporary *Jāhiliyyah* is grounded in knowledge, complexity and contempt. Moreover, the present day *Jāhiliyyah* has gone much beyond the older *Jāhiliyyah* in that the older *Jāhiliyyah* still took seriously the notion that a divinity, or in the case of polytheism a plurality of divinities, was sovereign over mere men; present day *Jāhiliyyah* on the other hand takes the form of claiming that the right to create values, to legislate rules of collective behavior, and to choose any way of the life rests with men, without regard to what God has prescribed.

"Today we are in similar or darker *Jāhiliyyah*, than that contemporaneous to early Islām. All that surrounds us is *Jāhiliyyah*. People's visions, beliefs, their habits and customs, their source of knowledge, art, literature rules and laws, even what we consider as Islāmic education and Islāmic thought - all of it is the product of *Jāhiliyyah*".<sup>13</sup>

Qutb finds the *Jāhili* systems adopted by human beings for themselves contrary to human nature and capable of providing only partial solutions to human problems. In such systems, man's unrestrained greed and self-aggrandizement become the overwhelming forces that dominate social economic and political relationships among their members leading inevitably to injustice and exploitation of some classes, races or nations by others.<sup>14</sup> Qutb argues that "Islām does not look at the labels, titles or banners that those various societies have adopted, they all have one thing in common and that is

their way of life is not based on the principle of complete submission to Allāh alone.<sup>15</sup>

## CHARACTERISTICS OF JĀHILIYYAH

### Usurpation of Sovereignty:

To Qutb, sovereignty-----a term derived from Latin word ‘*superanus*’ meaning supreme power or supreme authority, belongs to God alone. He, in fact, asserts that it is the greatest attribute of Allāh. This is because the ‘law’ is nothing but the will or command of the sovereign i.e. a sovereign is the source of law. To vest the legislative power or the law making power in any other person, body of persons or institution is to reject the sovereignty of Allāh. That is why in his “*Milestones*” Qutb describes *Jāhiliyyah* or a *Jāhilī* society a flagrant manifestation of the usurpation of this greatest attribute of Allāh. A *Jāhilī* society puts the legislation power in man made authorities or institutions, thus raising them to the status of God.

All *Jāhilī* societies, no matter what outward forms they may assume, have in common one important feature that is their violation of the exclusive sovereignty of God. Non Muslim societies are *Jāhilī* not only because “their forms of worship, their customs and manners are derived from false and distorted beliefs” but principally because “their institutions and their laws are not based on submission to God alone”. Instead of accepting “the rule of God”, these societies each in its own way, have established assemblies of men which have absolute power to legislate laws, thus usurping the right which belongs to God alone”.<sup>16</sup> By the same token, the Muslim societies are *Jāhilī* “not because they believe in other deities besides God or because they worship any other than God, but because their way of life is not based on submission to God alone”<sup>17</sup>. Belief that does not manifest in protest against the usurpation of divine sovereignty—is false belief according to Qutb. Although present day Muslims believe in the unity of God, still they have relegated the legislative attribute of God to others and submit to this authority, and from this authority, they derive their systems, their traditions and customs, their laws, their values, their standards and almost every practice of life”.<sup>18</sup> Qutb strengthens his

argument by quoting the verse from the holy Qur'ān, "those who do not judge according to what God has revealed are unbelievers".<sup>19</sup>

Further, Qutb attributes the main cause of the existence of human bondage and misery at the hands of others to this very act of the usurpation of God's sovereignty on earth. He asserts that in the Islāmic society where sovereignty exclusively belongs to God, the exploitation of man by man is simply not conceivable. It is because, first, a society fashioned in accordance with the Islāmic conception is a society of justice; it is an order in total harmony with the natural order; its members truly believing in God's exclusive sovereignty, will be infused with the spirit of Islām, will practice Islām in their daily lives, and will find repugnant and contrary to their conceptions of life relationships of human submission to another human; and in truly Islāmic society, the exploitation of man by man can not take hold since true belief in God's exclusive sovereignty is a belief that instantaneously gets translated into action to engage itself in the struggle against injustice; the Islāmic society would not, therefore, tolerate the lordship of man without fighting and struggling against it.

"When the highest authority is God alone----and is expressed in the dominance of divine law-----this sovereignty is the only kind in which humans are truly liberated from slavery to men. Only this is 'human civilization' because human civilization requires that the basis of rule be the true and the perfect freedom of man and the absolute dignity of each individual in society. There is no true freedom and no dignity for men or for each and every individual in a society where some individuals are lords who legislate and others are slaves who obey".<sup>20</sup>

### **Demotion of Humanity:**

For Qutb, a *Jāhilī* society is intrinsically anti-humanistic. Because man-made rules reign supreme and God's commandments are disregarded in such societies, not only does man's humanity get demoted but his morality too gets atrophied and his animalistic instincts bloom to their fullest extent. Qutb studied the anatomy of the western *Jāhilī* societies (capitalist as well as

communist societies) to firmly confirm his belief that a *Jāhilī* society reduces man from the God-given dignified status of noblest of the creations to merely an animal. The western societies, *Jāhilī* as they are, developed a lopsided materialist understanding of human nature. But such materialist philosophy which ignores the spiritual aspect of human life was bound to lead the western societies to a state of animalism. The western values according to him are animal values, because they fail to elevate man above the level of animals. Just as animals govern themselves by material impulse, so do the western *Jāhilī* societies. Qutb points to the western families, sexuality, capitalism, freedom and natural laws as evidence of animal values. First Qutb criticizes the western family. According to him the western family has been infected with the disease of *Jāhiliyyah*, which in turn communicated it to the whole society. The purpose of family, according to him, is to socialize children in Islāmic values i.e. to impart Islāmic values to the next generation. However, the West has degraded the role of the family. The root cause of this degradation is in the way West treats the women. Qutb claims that western relationships revolve around lust, passion and impulse. Women have disregarded their duty to rear children and have become objects of sexual pleasure. In the essay *The America I have seen*, Qutb describes the way women act in America thus; “The American girl is well acquainted with her body’s seductive capacity. She knows it lies in the face, and in expressive eyes and thirsty lips. She knows seductiveness lies in the round breasts, the full buttocks and in the shapely thighs, sleek legs and she knows all this and does not hide it! Then she adds to all this the fetching laugh, the naked looks and the bold moves and she does not ignore this for one moment or forget it”.<sup>21</sup>

By using their bodies in this manner women are prone to be treated by men as sexual objects rather than dignified child bearers. At the same time Qutb laments at American men for using their muscular build to woo women. He cites an article in a magazine which surveyed different women, coming to the conclusion that the majority were attracted to men with “ox muscles”. Such

public discussion of sexuality is an example of what Qutb argues is the “sexual primitiveness of the West”.<sup>22</sup>

Moreover, Qutb argues that women in the west have ceased to be dedicated mothers on both the physical and spiritual levels. Instead, they have dedicated themselves to work. They view dedicated motherhood as squandering their talents and abilities. Qutb points to this concept as a manifestation of the backward materialist values of the western society, where “material production is regarded as more important, more valuable and more honorable than the development of human character”.<sup>23</sup> Keeping these factors in mind, Qutb argues that it is no surprise that the high rates of divorce and illegitimate children are considered mainstream and acceptable in the West. He also cites homosexuality as another example of sexual permissiveness that typifies western *Jāhili* society. Due to this, he asserts that the western family has ceased to be a positive moral force.<sup>24</sup>

Qutb also criticized the west’s use of capitalism, because it leads to the sacrifice of moral values in the name of material gain. To him, each political or economic system has one dominant characteristic that determines the distribution and functions of its other elements. The dominant characteristic of capitalism is usury (*Riba*). An Islāmic economic system on the other hand, is distinguished by its corporate and income tax known as *Zakat* and its condemnation of usury.<sup>25</sup> Since usury is the dominant feature of capitalism, it naturally remains oblivious of a sense of economic justice and thus enables few wealthy to enslave the majority. Qutb’s critique of capitalism sounds socialist at first; it should be understood within the Islāmic context. Because God is the only true owner of any object, society is obliged to use property for the glory of God and the good of Muslim community. In this sense, private property is not inviolate because society has been commanded by God to use its material possessions for the gain of all instead of individual profit: “The individual is in a way a steward of his property on behalf of society: his tenure of property is more of a duty than an actual right of possession. Property in the widest sense is a right that can only belong to society, which in turn receives it as trust from

Allāh who is the only true owner of anything”.<sup>26</sup> Thus private ownership becomes more theoretical than of being practical. In short capitalist economic system, too as a manifestation of *Jāhili* system disregards the humanity of man. Moreover, Qutb argues that the West’s understanding of freedom, further confirms its animalism. Although, men may enjoy self-government in a liberal democracy, they are slaves rather than free. Their notion of freedom does not take note of enslavement of man by man according to Qutb. In effect, he is both a slave to himself as well as to other men. He is a slave to himself in the sense that self-government allows him to legislate his own desires, which are ignorant of God’s law. He is slave to other men because he lives under a man made system where men legislate what other men can or can not do; hence Muslims are denied the ability to worship God with full submission. For Qutb, rather than exhibiting the dignity of man, this brand of freedom denies it. The law of God was prescribed to free men from service to other men. Yet western *Jāhiliyyah* denies men the opportunity to free themselves.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, the West believes that man’s freedom exists in accordance with the natural law. Such an understanding of the natural law is another animalistic idea that Qutb criticizes. The West argues that the natural laws governing humanity can be discerned through reason. For Qutb, this is another example of how *Jāhiliyyah* permits the West to delude itself into believing that man is autonomous. Qutb argues that just as God ordered nature, he ordered human life through the *Shariah*; “He who has created the universe and man and who made man subservient to the laws that also govern the universe, has also prescribed the *Shariah* for his voluntary actions. If man follows *Shariah*, it results in harmony between his life and his nature. Each word of Allāh is part of the universal law and is as accurate and true as any of the laws known as the laws of nature. Thus the *Shariah* given to man to organize his life is also a universal law because it is related to the general law of the universe and is harmonious with it”.<sup>28</sup> The *Shariah* allows men and society to work in harmony just as the rest of the nature does. If humanity chooses to ignore the *Shariah*, it will live like animals, for society will become an uncivilized jungle that is in a constant state of war.



Society will inevitably fall into constant conflict and suffering, because man's rationality is incapable of providing answers. Qutb quotes the Qur'an to prove the inability of man's rationality to arrive at truth.<sup>29</sup> "Had truth followed their (men's) opinions, the heavens and earth and whosoever is in them, would surely have been corrupted".<sup>30</sup>

Like capitalism of the West, the communist societies too, are inherently harmful to man's humanity. The atheistic Marxism in fact treats man as a tool of production, an animal whose horizon does not extend beyond food, drink and lowly material needs. It thus debases human soul, depriving man of his most precious soul<sup>31</sup>. More or less, same is true of those self-acclaimed Muslim societies who do not adhere to *Shariah* but tend to borrow ideas from these western *Jāhili* societies.

### ISLĀMIC SOCIETY

Qutb's preoccupation with the establishment of an ideal Islāmic society is attested both by his pervasive writing as well as by his own martyrdom. However, he does not view this Islāmic society new. His vision is a restoration, not an innovation. According to him, this revival aims to restore society to its original Godly intent. God created society to worship Him as its Sovereign and follow His guidance in full submission. The prototype of this ideal Islāmic society, according to Qutb, is provided by two societies in history; one the original community or the first community of mankind and the second one, the first Qur'ānic generation or the generation of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) and that of his four rightly guided caliphs'.

For Qutb the significance of original community or the first community, which comprised of Adam (A.S), Hawa (A.S) and their off springs, is that it shows the humans share the same origin because we are the members of the same family of Adam and Hawa (A.S). Qutb claims that this original family was tightly-knit and had a uniform belief that God was Sovereign. As this original community grew over time, it evolved and new cultural norms began to develop. Qutb argues that God intended for the original community to grow and evolve. Because God created and understood human nature, He knew that

men would differ in their opinions. Consequently, He sent prophets to the people to establish and guide them to differentiate between truth and deviation. The prophets were to establish truth through *the Book*.<sup>32</sup> Qutb claims that the Book is not only the Qur'an, but all revelation given by God to mankind through various prophets from time to time since the creation of first community. Hence each of the prophets from Nuh (A.S) to Muhammad (S.A.W), taught in essence the same Book of God. The Book taught that only God is the Sovereign and to attribute this sovereignty to any other person or thing is to fall into a state of *Jāhiliyyah*. Nonetheless, communities rejected God, His Book and His Prophets by continuing in *Jāhiliyyah*. Qutb views Islāmic society as a restoration of the original community, which was unified under God's authority prior to the deviation of *Jāhiliyyah*.<sup>33</sup>

The creation of the Islāmic society would also be a restoration of what Qutb refers to as the "unique Qur'ānic generation" i.e. the generation of the Prophet (S.A.W) and his companions. Qutb asserts that history has not seen a better or similar generation to the generation of companions since the inception of life on the earth.<sup>34</sup> The uniqueness of this "generation of the companions of the prophet" is attributed to three main factors by Qutb. Firstly, the companions followed the pristine teachings of Qur'ān as their only guidelines. Qutb claims that they derived their entire system of life, both as individuals and as a community, from the Qur'ān. He emphasizes that they did not rely on the Qur'ān out of ignorance; they were aware of other cultures and civilizations like Roman, Greek, Persian, Indian, Chinese, Christian and Jewish. Rather they chose the Qur'ān because it was a pure spring of knowledge from God. While other Muslim societies have used the Qur'ān, Qutb argues that they have not followed the example set by the generation of companions of the Prophet (S.A.W). Qutb argues that the purity of the Qur'ān could not be maintained by the latter generations of the Muslims; as they went on to mingle with it not only the non Islāmic ideas borrowed from Greek philosophy, Jewish scriptures and so on, but also the Islāmic scholastic theology and jurisprudence. Consequently, the later generations after the generation of companions of the

Prophet (S.A.W) were brought up and trained with this mixed source and hence the generation like this was never witnessed again.<sup>35</sup>

Secondly, the “generation of the companions of the Prophet (S.A.W)” viewed the Qur’ān as a book of instructions and keenly aspired to mould their life according to these instructions. Their desire to practice the instructions of the Qur’ān is vindicated by the way they approached the Qur’ān. They would at the most recite ten verses of the Qur’ān at a time and then strive to bring them into practice rather than reciting long passages to make it virtually impossible to follow these passages simultaneously. In his own words: “None of them came to the Qur’ān to increase his knowledge for the sake of knowledge itself or to solve some scientific or legal problems, or to improve his understanding. Rather he turned to the Qur’ān to find out what the Almighty creator has prescribed for him and for the group in which he lived; for his life and for the life of the group. He approached it to act immediately on what he heard, as a soldier on the battle field reads ‘Today’s Bulletin so that he may know what is to be done’.<sup>36</sup> Hence revelation was practical and intended for literal application. The new Islāmic society should restore this view of the Qur’ān, and reject any form of Islām that is merely theoretical, abstract and reflective.

Lastly, the moment a person embraced Islām in time of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W), he separated himself from *Jāhiliyyah* completely. Qutb believes that the ‘unique Quranic generation’ rejected any *Jāhili* environment and adhered to Islām completely. They developed an uncompromising attitude towards the *Jāhiliyyah* and were never tempted to mix their Islāmic instructions with the instructions of *Jāhili* society. Because they no longer valued *Jāhiliyyah*, “no pressure from *Jāhili* society could have any effect on their firm resolve”. Qutb stresses this point in “*Milestones*” because he felt that most Muslims during his time were compromising with *Jāhiliyyah* and mixing many of its beliefs and ideas with Islām. He writes on this point with such emotional fervor which is reflective of his discontent. “We are also surrounded by *Jāhiliyyah* today, which is of the same nature as it was during the first period of Islām, perhaps a little deeper. Our whole environment, people’s beliefs and

ideas, habits and art, rules and laws—is *Jāhiliyyah*, even to the extent that what we consider to be Islāmic culture, Islāmic sources, Islāmic philosophy and Islāmic thought are also constructs of *Jāhiliyyah*. This is why the true Islāmic values never enter our hearts, why our minds are never illuminated by Islāmic concepts, and why no group of people arises among us who are of equal caliber to that of the first generation of Islām”.<sup>37</sup> Qutb demands that the modern Islāmic movement should refuse to concede anything to *Jāhili* societies, especially to the West. This is a reflection of his belief that truth and falsehood can never co-exist. The moment, the truth i.e. Islām accepts any attributes of falsity or *Jāhiliyyah*, it loses its superiority.

Qutb demands that just as the first generation of Muslims created a community with faith as its foundation, so should the new Islāmic society. He claims that this spiritual foundation comes through the confession of the first article of faith that “there is no God but Allāh”. Each member of the Islāmic society should make this confession and live by it. If they live by this confession, Qutb claims that Islāmic society can then build up its own institutions and practices into a fully Islāmic society, with every aspect under God’s sovereignty. Society should be based on belief because it is man’s distinguishing attribute. According to Qutb, Islāmic society will not pay heed to nationalism, class or race. It will be a community of believers. Qutb claims that Islāmic society will be greater than any other, because it bases itself on spirituality. Islām’s focus on spirituality is all inclusive for humankind and brings out man’s most noble characteristics. Qutb argues that nationalist, materialist, and ethnic societies base themselves on attributes that man has in common with animals. Consequently, they put a ceiling on societal progress and prosperity. Although western societies may have reached high levels of economic prosperity, they suffer morally and spiritually because of their ignorance of man’s need for spiritual. According to him, Islāmic society will be the most civilized because it will give true freedom, which is spiritual freedom to each individual; it ensures true freedom by ending man’s enslavement of other men as is found in the *Jāhili* society. Islām frees them to worship God

alone. Qutb believes that this type of spiritual freedom creates a freedom of conscience that destroys the barriers between God and man. While living life according to the demands of other men and man made laws, humans are incapable of fully understanding God because they are prohibited from worshipping Him in complete submission. However, in Islāmic society, man will be able to devote all thought and action to God, thereby giving him the opportunity to meet his highest spiritual potential.<sup>38</sup> Qutb in short wants Muslims to grapple for restoring Islāmic society, its essential attribute of supremacy of God's law; i.e. true and firm acknowledgement on the part of the members of the society that sovereignty exclusively belongs to God and it shall be the basis of their society. When God is recognized as the only sovereign and His word or law (*Shariah*) reigns supreme in a society, it imparts a lively and dynamic character to the whole society. The members of such society enjoy true freedom, equality, justice and economic and spiritual prosperity. However, Qutb laments that such an immensely essential principle, that is Sovereignty exclusively belongs to God, has ceased to be the governing principle in contemporary Muslim societies, as a result of which Qutb views them as forms of *Jāhilī* order: “*The Muslim community has been extinct for a few centuries, for Muslim community does not denote the name of a land in which Islām resides, nor is it a people whose forefathers lived under the Islāmic system at some earlier time. It is the name of a group of people whose manners, ideas and concepts, rules and regulations, values and criteria, are all derived from the Islāmic source. The Muslim community with these characteristics vanished at the moment laws of God became suspended on earth*”.<sup>39</sup>

## CHARACTERISTICS OF ISLĀMIC SOCIETY

### Liberty:

According to Qutb, in the Islāmic society wherein sovereignty is acknowledged as the sole attribute of God, individual liberty becomes an intrinsic character of society. Once a person acknowledges the sovereignty of God and as a corollary to this accepts that only God has the right of obedience

over him, he becomes liberated from all sorts of bogus authorities including his own desires and passions.

### **Equality:**

According to Qutb like liberty, equality too is possible only under a divine Sovereign, where all members are equal by virtue of their common submission to God. This is not the Lockean idea of equality whereby all persons are free and equal in that each has a natural right to life, liberty and property. Rather, it is the case since all are equally subject to God's call, they are therefore equal: "the citizenship Islām intends for men is a citizenship of belief through which all...are equal under the banner of Allāh". In *Social Justice in Islām*, Qutb seems to define such natural equality in the sight of God primarily in terms of racial equality, and equality in status, origin and station. Yet, like Aristotle and Rousseau, Qutb goes on to argue that such equality does not and should not deny the existence of inequalities in natural endowments such as intellect, strength, beauty or inequalities resulting from such "natural" differences as gender. To ignore such natural inequalities is to level differential talents down to the lowest common denominator. In short, Qutb's claim that an Islāmic society guarantees true freedom and equality is because, as he argues in the '*Milestones*', once sovereignty is established in the proper scope (like in Islāmic society), social justice, equality and freedom will naturally follow. Thus both equality and freedom are premised upon submission to God's will through membership in His community.<sup>40</sup>

### **Equality of sexes and stability of Family:**

According to Qutb, one of the most salient examples of western bankruptcy is the deterioration of family unit in the West. In *Social Justice in Islām*, he argues that it is through the strength of the family unit----- specialization of work between the sexes, mother as a primary caretaker----- that the morals of the next generation are inculcated and reinforced. When a woman becomes a sexual object, that is, when men objectify her or when she asserts her sexual identity; when she abandons the natural division of labor between the sexes and enters the workforce; when the relationship between

men and women is matter of lust and impulse, society has ceased to be part of what he calls a civilization. In fact, Qutb goes so far as to say that the relationship between sexes is the key to the entire character of a society. It determines whether a society is civilized or backward.<sup>41</sup> Responding to the baseless criticism of Islām's unequal treatment, Qutb argues that, "Islām has guaranteed to women complete equality with men with regard to their sex".<sup>42</sup> However, their differing physical endowments give the sexes different practical roles in society. Due to their maternal responsibility, women must tend to the family and rearing of children. Males have no such child-bearing physical qualities; therefore, they are able to attend to work and societal affairs. Man's attention to women develops differing abilities. Man's attention to societal issues causes him to become more intellectual, thoughtful and reflective whereas a woman's focus on her family will cause her to grow in emotions and sentimentality. Qutb argues that wherever, physical endowments and resulting responsibilities or roles are identical, the two sexes are treated equal. To prove this point, he mentions that women may choose their husband and dowry. Qutb realizes that the West views Islāmic equality as sexism. In response, he argues that the West establishes equality only in economic terms, whereas Islām provides a holistic spiritual equality that recognizes the differing qualities of the sexes.<sup>43</sup>

### **Mutual responsibility:**

The Islāmic society, according to Qutb will also follow the principle of mutual responsibility. He believes that mutual responsibility must exist on several levels. First the individual must have responsibility towards himself. This is his personal responsibility for the status of his soul. He must keep his soul true to the Islāmic faith. Second, the individual has responsibility towards his family. To Qutb family is the most important unit of society. It acts as the most important agency of socialization and inculcates Islāmic norms and values in the children of the family and, thereby, in transferring these values from one generation to next. It also acts as a model for the larger family of society. In fact, it is for this reason that Islām has established rules regarding inheritance;

just as a child inherits the physical and mental traits of his parents, he has the right to their material possessions.<sup>44</sup> This mutual responsibility also extends to the relationship between individual and the society. The individual oversees the welfare of the society. His work adds to the prosperity of the society; in this way, his work fulfills his obligations to himself, his family, and society. Nonetheless, man can not do whatever he pleases, for he is responsible to the society. And, conversely, in the same way, the society is responsible to all individuals. It must protect the whole society, so that individuals can not direct it in order to seek their own interests. To illustrate this point, Qutb quotes a story attributed to Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W). In the story, a group of persons was traveling in the ship and were partners; of them each one had his own place. One man among them struck his place with an axe and the reminder said to him, “What are you doing? He said, “This is my place and I can do what I wish in it. Then if they (rest of the people) restrain him, he and they are safe; but if they let him be, he and they all perish”.<sup>45</sup> Hence individuals have freedom to do as they please; however, if their actions are evil or detrimental to society as a whole, the society is responsible to protect the welfare of all individuals. Islāmic society has this responsibility because; it is a unified community of believers. It can not passively accept evil, for it must stand for truth.<sup>46</sup>

Accordingly, Islāmic society is responsible for the care of its weak members. For this reason, all members of the society pay *Zakat*. The *Zakat* is a charitable tax that is paid to provide for the sustenance of those who can not provide for themselves. Qutb claims that “if any individual passes the night hungry, the blame attaches to the community because it did not bestir itself to feed him”.<sup>47</sup> Qutb compares Islāmic society to one body because it is a community of believers. “The whole Islāmic community is like one body, and it feels all things in common; whatever happens to one of its members, the remainders of the members are also affected. This is in the perfect, descriptive simile which the noble messenger uses of it when he says: ‘The likeness of the believers in their mutual love and mercy and relationship is that of the body; when one



member is afflicted, all the rest of the body joins with it to suffer feverish sleeplessness”.<sup>48</sup>

### **Justice:**

Since the ancient times when the society was in its primitive form, justice has been taken to be the most important concern for enhancing the overall well-being of the society. The Greek thinkers particularly Plato and Aristotle debated at length over this subject. Plato even went on to give a subtitle of “concerning justice” to his *magnum opus* “*The Republic*”. However, these thinkers as well as their successors even to this day could not arrive at a comprehensive conception of justice. For Qutb, Islām has this distinction that it provides us a comprehensive notion of justice. “It establishes this comprehensive human justice on two strong foundations: first, the human conscience, working within the spirit of man; and second a system of religious law working in the social sphere. These two powers are united by an appeal to the depths of feeling in the human consciousness. At the same time, Islām does not overlook the weakness of man, or his need for external compulsion”.<sup>49</sup> Islām reposes immense confidence in the human conscience when it is educated; it sets it up as the guardian of the legal processes, to see that they are observed and maintained. At the same time, it does not leave human conscience to its own resources; it challenges it to rise above what law and responsibility prescribe for it. It has set the fear of Allāh as the sanction on the conscience, and has placed over it the thought of Allāh’s omniscience, with the aim of ensuring and inspiring its activity.<sup>50</sup> Thus, Qutb believes the Islāmic society takes full care to promote justice comprehensively with all its meticulous details through the implementation of *Shariah*. But the *Shariah* in turn, is implemented only after the conscience of its individual members concedes that this *Shariah* has been prescribed by God.<sup>51</sup> That this Islāmic society promotes justice meticulously is perhaps vindicated most unequivocally by the economic system operating in the Islāmic society. Like all other aspects of the Islāmic society, its economic system will also be governed by the principles of *Shariah*. Qutb claims that Islāmic economic system has two objectives, first, the welfare

of the individual, and second, the welfare of the society as a whole. It accomplishes both by legislating practical laws that help maintain an economically fair, just and prosperous society. It also exhorts and encourages men to be moral in their economic choices. For example, individuals should not waste money on things like gambling and other forms of sinful entertainment. To Qutb, the natural corollary of confession of faith on the part of each member of the society is that its economy gets moulded into a more egalitarian form. This is because any member of Islāmic society having committed faith will never choose to exploit others for his own benefit. At the same time, he will choose outlets such as alms-giving, for any excessive wealth which he may acquire.<sup>52</sup>

#### **Harakah (Action or Dynamism):**

A sincere acknowledgement of Allāh's absolute sovereignty on the part of man liberates him from all shackles of man made authorities according to Qutb. However, Qutb conceives that mere acknowledgement or mere belief in God's sovereignty is not enough. It is only by investing his faith in action that man can obtain such freedom. In Qutb's view man is an integrated being; he is both an actor-believer and a believer-actor. "Man's concepts and ideas, behavior and responses, beliefs and actions... are all tied together".<sup>53</sup> When addressing man God does not expound on a philosophical system of ideas and abstractions, rather He insists that man act his belief. The necessity of action, Qutb notes is characteristic of all life conceptions: *a'aqeedah* (belief) always motivates people to action, propelling them towards definite goals through the wilderness of the time and the darkness of the way".<sup>54</sup> Islām is no exception to this rule. The nature of Islāmic concept is not to remain hidden in the human mind. It must be translated immediately into action to become a concrete reality in the world of events. The believer can not be content to have his faith remain concealed in his heart, because he feels compelled to make his faith an effective force in changing his own life as well as the lives of the people around him.<sup>55</sup> By virtue of being a world-concept, a life-creed, Islām assigns man an active role in this world and provides him with a particular plan of life-

action. This feature is bound to ensure dynamism of the Islāmic society—always ready to crush the evil and progress towards the intrinsic goals of man’s vigeerency on earth. The Islāmic conception as taught in the Qur’ān is a practical plan for the purpose of erecting an Islāmic reality. The true believer who has interacted with the word of God, who believes in God’s absolute sovereignty, will not rest with mere passive belief; that very belief will continuously keep stirring him to act. “The Islāmic concept keeps the mind of the Muslim restless, always calling him to action from the depths of his consciousness, telling him to get up ad go out and actualize this concept in the real world”.<sup>56</sup>

In the *Milestones*, Qutb goes on to make action a requirement for being a “true” Muslim. It is not enough for Qutb that a community call itself Muslim, or that its members profess themselves Muslims; it must “act” its faith or otherwise renounce its claim to being Muslim: A Muslim community is that one which is a practical interpretation of declaration of faith and of all its corollaries; and the society which does not translate into practice this faith and its corollaries is not Muslim.<sup>57</sup>

This stance of Qutb obviously contradicts the established orthodox tradition, which recognizes mere pronouncement of the article “There is no God but Allāh” on the part of a person for considering him to be a Muslim. But it is important to note that Qutb does not explicitly denounce individual Muslims as *Kuffar*, and rarely does he use the word ‘*Kufr*’ as such. What Qutb denounces as “un-Islāmic” are the social system, the prevailing order, the “*Nizam*”. This stance of Qutb is understandable, especially when taking his own understanding of religion into consideration. Qutb, it may be noted, does not view religion comprising of worship alone. On the contrary, it must by necessity be involved with the mundane actions of human living. Man-devised social systems are also religious in Qutb’s view. Although a deity is not explicitly mentioned in man-made systems, a deity is still worshipped, be it a man, an idea, an institution, and so forth. Therefore, someone who lives by a creed other than Islām is a worshipper and follower of that creed and as a result

can not be considered a true Muslim, since he is committing the cardinal sin of association (*shirk*) of another deity to the one true God. It is important to note that Qutb's breach with orthodoxy does not stem from his insistence that a true Muslim is one who sincerely submits to God and believes in His absolute sovereignty. On that score, Qutb is technically within orthodox bounds, if one accepts his assumptions. At the least, the Muslim who accepts a sovereign over him other than God is committing the basic sin of *shirk*, since he is associating some other entity with God; if he does believe in God and fulfills Islām's pillars, but at the same time lives under a non-Islāmic system, the least that can be said, given Qutb's assumptions, is that this Muslim is worshipping two deities: Allāh and the deity representing the other social system he follows in his non-religious life. But worse, tradition requires the minimum of *shahāda* from the professing believer; someone who rejects Allāh's absolute sovereignty or Muḥammad's prophecy has not fulfilled the bare minimum for becoming Muslim, and therefore can not be a true Muslim. Qutb reasons that the true believer in Allāh's absolute sovereignty will not accept any system of life except that of Islām: he will "rebel" against anyone and anything that constrains his freedom to act and believe, and will refuse to submit to any authority other than God; some who does submit and who does not fight, therefore can not be a true believer, but rather a nominal Muslim and for Qutb not a Muslim at all.

For Qutb the "generation of prophet and his four successors" represents the only historically established Islāmic society. He notes, that his society and the towering excellence which it achieved "was not the result of an unrepeatable miracle" but rather "the fruit of human exertion made by the first community" and that therefore, it "can be achieved whenever that exertion is again made. The possibility of reproducing the success of the generation of Prophet and his four successors" is at the heart of Qutb's discourse of revolution. This generation of "Prophet and his companions" for Qutb is central because it is an event in history and in that event man plays a central role.

In *this religion of Islām*, Qutb asserts that “the (divine path) is not brought into being by divine enforcement, in the same way that God enforces His will in the ordering of the firmament and the revolution of the planets. It is brought into being by a group of people undertaking the task, believing in it completely and conforming to it as closely as possible, trying to bring it into being in the hearts and lives of others too”<sup>58</sup>.

### **Harmony:**

Qutb strongly believes that Islām is in perfect accordance with human nature. Because of this belief, he concedes that as long as each individual has sincere, genuine and devout faith, the society will work in harmony. It is precisely because of this reason that he does not endorse a monolithic Islāmic state that seeks to control the actions of the individuals. The government should not be controlling their actions. Instead, it should act on behalf of their faith. Qutb believes that with the removal of *Jāhili* institutions which inhibited the spiritual consciousness of the people, the government would only have to act in a limited number of ways. Initially the government may have to act strongly to establish God’s system of life. But for the Islāmic society, Qutb concedes, it will be anything but a tyranny. The community of believers will only approve and desire such actions because their faith demands it. Then over time, divine system of life will become so ingrained in the hearts and habits of the people that government action will become redundant.

### **METHOD OF TRANSFORMATION**

The notion that the Islāmic society is not only unique and fundamentally different from other social systems but is the only society that is in perfect harmony with the natural scheme of the universe is a primary subtext that underlies the Qutbian discourse. Islām’s singularity and perfection inform how Qutb views other systems: for all their diversity, non-Islāmic societies are basically the same in their imperfections and weaknesses. Qutb argues that Islām’s uniqueness is attested by the singular universal success it achieved in the short span of time. Its uniqueness also lies in its purity and simplicity. It favours non-specialized and active readings of its message and it also refuses to

separate action from belief. Therefore, in the quest for re-establishing the Islāmic order or Islāmic society, Qutb proposes an Islāmic retreat from impure i.e. non-Islāmic and at the same time urges Muslims to engage in a struggle against what stands in the way of a truly Islāmic reconfiguration of nominally Muslim society. This subtext is present in Qutb's works from the very beginning of his Islāmic writings, and remains in effect throughout his subsequent works. However, in his earlier works, just like *Social Justice in Islām*, Qutb just seems to be content with providing a framework for an Islāmic order. In *Social Justice in Islām*, Qutb outlines what he believes to be the social, political and economic systems called for by Islām. In *The Battle between Islām and Capitalism*, Qutb is preoccupied with the immediate problems of social justice and wealth distribution faced by Muslim society and the solutions that Islām provides, and in *The World Peace and Islām*, Qutb turns his attention to illustrating how Islām can secure the world true peace, internationally, socially and spiritually. In these works significantly all of them written prior to 1952 Nasser revolution Islām's purity and uniqueness inform the arguments and propositions made by Qutb, and are at times explicitly highlighted, but are seldom the direct object of systematic analysis. However, in *Islāmic Concept and its Characteristics*, Qutb's focus is no longer on mapping out an Islāmic order or on the capacity of Islām to solve an array of problems that Muslim society faced. His focus has now clearly shifted from spelling out the outlines of the future Muslim society to an analysis and an elaboration of the conceptual substructure as he sees it, of both the Islāmic order and its antithesis, the *Jāhili* order. It is however, important to note that Qutb does not introduce any new themes and notions that were altogether absent in his previous works. On the contrary, a remarkable continuity is upheld across his body of works, in both the themes treated and tone used. According to Ibrahim M. Abu Rabi, Qutb's phase of thought during the period of 1952-1962 is an extension, and not a negation of the previous phase. It is an elaboration on new themes during a unique historical era (the Egyptian revolution of 1952 and its aftermath).<sup>59</sup> At the same time, however, it is

obvious that starting with *The Islāmic Concept and its Characteristics*, Qutb is less interested in finding a place for Islām in the life that Muslims faced and more interested in defining the essence of whole new order. In his works, subsequent to the last mentioned work, Qutb's aim is to highlight the essence of Islām through a precise and systematic vocabulary, rather than to illustrate Islām through the expansive language of example and elaboration. While his chapters in *Social Justice in Islām* bore titles such as "The methods of social justice in Islām" and "political theory is Islām" and so on, in *The Islāmic concept and its characteristics* one finds single word title headings such as "divinity" (*Rubbaniyah*), "firmness" (*Thabat*), comprehensiveness (*shumul*) and so on. The turn to doctrinal Islām, as signaled in the last mentioned work, mirrors another turn in Qutb's overall outlook and strategy. Qutb's pre-1952 works are marked not only by their preoccupation with outlining substantive solutions to social, economic and political problems, but also by optimism in the possibility of changing society gradually. On the other hand Qutb's post 1952 works, especially his works after 1954 while focusing on the elaboration of systematic doctrine, hold a decidedly pessimistic view of gradual reform. 1954 was the beginning of what turned out to be a bloody decade of confrontation between the Nasser regime and *Al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun* – a confrontation in which *Al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun* bore heavier toll.<sup>60</sup> Sayyid Qutb spent most of his life between 1954 and his execution in 1966 in Nasser's prison camps and it was in those camps that he charted out the renewal of his Islāmic thought.<sup>61</sup> Qutb's writings during this period, especially the *Milestones* vividly project a revolutionary message. In this work, he considers the demolition of the *Jāhili* order a prerequisite for establishing the Islāmic society. He in fact declares that it is the foremost duty of Islām to eliminate *Jāhiliyyah* from the leadership of man and to take this leadership into its own hands and enforce the particular way of life which is its permanent feature. Islām Qutb insists, did not come to accommodate or cohabit with the status quo. It did not come to "support people's desires, which are expressed in their concepts, institutions, modes of living and habits and traditions. Rather it came to abolish

all such concepts, laws and traditions.<sup>62</sup> Moreover, in its struggle to demolish *Jāhiliyyah*, Islām should at no point compromise, even momentarily, with the *Jāhilī* order. The line between what is *Jāhilī* and what is Islāmic is clearly drawn so that coexistence of *Jāhilī* concepts and Islāmic concepts can not be sustained or tolerated in an Islāmic order. The true Islāmic method of bringing about the demise of *Jāhilī* society and the establishment of Islāmic society is not strategic but doctrinal according to Qutb. Qutb's emphasis on the adoption of a doctrinal rather than strategic method for eliminating *Jāhiliyyah* and establishing the Islāmic society is the result of his belief that all societies or systems are informed by a coherent and all encompassing world conception. He argues that the Muslims who set out to establish the Islāmic order must equip themselves with means that are commensurate with the all encompassing and comprehensive character of the *Jāhilī* order surrounding them. He argues that the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) did not try to garner support for his call by adopting any strategic methods despite being a great strategist and despite the fact that he could have easily done so by catering to the interests or by taping into the insecurities or frustrations of potential allies. On the contrary, he insisted on an unyielding message of the doctrine of monotheism; "There is no god but Allāh." Qutb emphasizes that today's Muslims should also confront *Jāhiliyyah* in a similar manner without trying to devise strategies and tactics. This would help them to avoid any compromise with the Islāmic call as well as make their struggle a truly meaningful struggle. He asserts that when confronting *Jāhiliyyah* and struggling to bring about its demise, the active Muslim should not claim that the Islām he is promoting is an Islām that is in harmony with the order that prevails, even if such a claim is made tongue-in-cheek. When it originally came Qutb argues, "Islām never said to the people that it would not touch their way of living, their modes, their concepts and their values except perhaps slightly".<sup>63</sup> Nor did it "propose similarities with their system or manners to please them as some do today when they present Islām to the people under the names of Islāmic democracy' or 'Islāmic socialism'.<sup>64</sup> 'Islām and *Jāhiliyyah* are essentially different from each other' and if



sometimes it appears that some parts of Islām resemble some aspects of the life of the people in *Jāhiliyyah*.... this resemblance in minor aspects is a mere coincidence; the roots of the two trees are entirely different.<sup>65</sup>

### **Jihād:**

As mentioned, Qutb's method for the establishment of Islāmic society draws from his perception of the surrounding *Jāhiliyyah* and his ideological wholism i.e. all societies are informed by a coherent and all encompassing world conception. According to him, the *Jāhiliyyah* whatever form it may assume takes the form 'not of a theory but of an active movement'; it is an organized society and there is a close cooperation and loyalty between the individuals and it is always ready and alive to defend its existence consciously or unconsciously. It crushes all elements which seem to be dangerous to its personality.<sup>66</sup> Qutb thus concedes that transforming the *Jāhilī* society into an Islāmic society is an arduous task that requires struggle at two levels-the ideological and the practical. This struggle is what Qutb calls *Jihad*. It is *Jihad* according to him, which becomes a means for transforming the *Jāhilī* society into an Islāmic society. But who are to initiate this *Jihad*? Qutb holds that the *Jihad* must be initiated by a vanguard of professional revolutionaries---the chosen elite, *Al-safwa al-mukhtar* from among a body of believers *Usba mu'mina*. The members of this vanguard according to him dedicate their whole life to this one purpose<sup>67</sup>. This vanguard must confront *Jāhilī* society at the ideological level by resorting to preaching and persuasion, by refuting the arguments of *Jāhiliyyah* and exposing its corruption. At the practical level it should amass enough power to remove the social, economic and political obstacles to the establishment of the Islāmic community. The use of force or power is justified not only by the events in the Prophet's life and quotes from the Qur'ān but also by the nature and mechanisms of the power of the secular state in the contemporary world. Further, Qutb believes that the oppressor's of Allāh's servants and the usurpers of Allāh's authority on earth will not relinquish their power merely through argument and rhetoric.<sup>68</sup>

It may be recalled that to Qutb all non-Islāmic societies or *Jāhilī* societies are oppressive in essence. Therefore, *Jihad* as a means of eliminating such societies becomes a “universal declaration of the freedom of man from this oppression, which in concrete terms takes the form of man’s slavery to man and to his own desires.”<sup>69</sup> It rejects the slavery that occurs in *Jāhilī* societies and proclaims that man deserves to be free. Qutb claims that man finds his freedom in the laws of God which have come through His divine revelation. Unless man lives by this divine guidance, he will be enslaved to his own bodily desires. The best illustration of this concept comes in Qutb’s criticism of western society and culture. Because God’s laws do not define the social order, the West has misused sexuality; the family has lost its moral purpose because it has been enslaved to human impulse. In this sense, *Jihad* is waged to return man to his Godly purpose. It seeks to free men from slavery to their impulse, which has caused them to suffer.

Qutb makes it clear that *Jihad* must be waged universally, (but initiated and led by a vanguard). It is universal because all human beings deserve to be free. God does not limit Himself to a particular country, sex, or race of people. He desires that the entire human race reject *Jāhiliyyah* and accept God’s guidance, for if the entire human race were to do so, the world will live harmoniously and in accordance with human nature. Further, according to him, *Jihad* creates an environment that allows Islām to prosper as a practical system of life. It creates this environment by abolishing the organizations and the institutions of the *Jāhilī* societies, which prevent people from reforming their ideas and beliefs, force them to follow deviant ways, and make them serve other humans instead of their true Lord.<sup>70</sup> It is obligatory to wage *Jihad* against the obstacles in the way of an Islāmic society because all men have the right to serve God alone. Hence Muslims are obliged to free their fellow men. If a Muslim does not wage *Jihad* against *Jāhiliyyah*, he fails to recognize the right of his fellow men to serve God alone.<sup>71</sup>

Qutb claims that *Jihad* at the practical level is waged against institutions and organizations, not against the individuals. *Jāhilī* institutions are the

enemies, not the people who live under the *Jāhili* system. It is these institutions and organizations and especially the government organizations that possess power over the *Jāhili* society and make society conform to the non-Islāmic ideals and thereby act as obstacles in the way of establishing an Islāmic society. After stating the objective of *Jihad* as the removal of *Jāhili* institutions that act as obstacles to the establishment of Islāmic society Qutb raises an important issue. This issue is the issue of compulsion. The Qur'ān explicitly states that "There is no compulsion in religion,"<sup>72</sup> therefore, people should not be forced into conversion. Qutb concedes that the establishment of Islāmic society does not violate this commandment. In an argument reminiscent of Rousseau's claim that human beings must be "forced to be free" Qutb maintains that coercion is justified in the pursuit of liberation from slavery: Islām has not only the right but the obligation to realize human freedom. After all the Qur'ān says "oppression is worse than killing".<sup>73</sup> Islām means freedom from *Jāhiliyyah*, freedom from the enslavement of one individual to another; freedom to exercise the freedom to choose. But freedom to choose what? Islām of course. The paradox is that Qutb both claims for Islām, the status of liberator from oppression and insists that freedom be exercised in acceptance of Allāh's sovereignty. Qutb justifies this move by arguing that, after the constraints of *Jāhiliyyah* are eradicated, the only choice is the sovereignty of Allāh. For only this authority makes choice itself possible.<sup>74</sup>

### **Vanguard:**

Qutb suggests that this struggle against *Jāhiliyyah* must be initiated and led by a vanguard. The Vanguard, Qutb argues ought to be modeled on the physical and political structures of its enemy. As the *Jāhiliyyah* is not simply a theoretical formula, but a dynamic movement in command of a society, which constitutes an organic whole, Islām itself must be embodied in a dynamic association of its own, surpassing its rival ideologically and structurally. This is the only way to possess the capability of obliterating this *Jāhiliyyah*.<sup>75</sup> The *Jāhiliyyah* it will strive to eliminate, Qutb argues, will naturally react to its efforts with resistance and hostility. In its mildest form, the *Jāhiliyyah* will try

to frustrate it by insisting that valid reform or reconstruction is always predicated on the definition of a fully detailed solution to all aspects of social life, this *Jāhiliyyah* will ask it such questions as “What are the details to which you are calling? How much research have you done? How many articles have you prepared and how many subjects have you written about? Have you constituted the Jurisprudence on new principles?—as if nothing was lacking for the enforcement of Islāmic law except research in Jurisprudence and its details.”<sup>76</sup> Such questions, according to Qutb, are mere delaying tactics for “diverting attention from real and earnest work; are a method through which the workers for Islām can be made to waste their time in building castles in the air”. Qutb suggests that it is the duty primarily of the vanguard to “expose these tactics and reduce them to dust, to reject this ridiculous proposal of the reconstruction of Islāmic law”. For a society which is neither willing to submit to the law of God, nor expresses any weariness with laws emanating from sources other than God.<sup>77</sup> But beyond mere delaying tactics, *Jāhiliyyah* will resist and fight whenever its interests become threatened, “history tells us that the *Jāhili* society chooses to fight and not to make peace, attacking the vanguard of Islām at its very inception, whether it be a few individuals or whether it be groups...”<sup>78</sup> The Islāmic society, therefore, can not be established without fighting *Jāhiliyyah*. The members of the “vanguard” are according to Qutb “true believers”, they have thoroughly submitted to God exclusively and they will grant sovereignty over their lives only to God. As their mission is to confront the prevailing *Jāhiliyyah* and to work towards bringing about its annihilation, they must, in their struggle against *Jāhiliyyah*, know how to interact with this *Jāhiliyyah* that surrounds them and must establish a relationship with it that will best promote the vanguard’s mission. Most importantly, the vanguard must understand that its mission “is not to compromise with the practices of the *Jāhili* society” nor to “be loyal to it”.<sup>79</sup> Including himself among this vanguard, Qutb warns that we and *Jāhiliyyah* are on different roads, and even if we take one step in its company, we will lose our goal entirely and will lose our way as well.<sup>80</sup> In its struggle, the vanguard

must spiritually cut itself off from *Jāhili* society and in general “keep itself somewhat aloof from this all encompassing *Jāhiliyyah*”.<sup>81</sup> All loyalty to the leadership of this *Jāhiliyyah* must be withdrawn, whether this leadership is ‘in the guise of priests, magicians or astrologers or in the form of political, social or economic leadership.’<sup>82</sup>

Qutb, however, does at times hedge on his otherwise uncompromising call for the total severing of all relations with *Jāhiliyyah*. The Islāmic vanguard should understand that ultimately its aim is to demolish and do away with the *Jāhili* order, and moreover, that in carrying out its mission it should never compromise with this *Jāhiliyyah*. At the same time, the Islāmic vanguard “should also keep some ties with *Jāhiliyyah*” and maintain at least a window communication and interaction with it. The abolition of *Jāhiliyyah* will not come about through compromise, but neither will it be fulfilled by “severing relations with it and removing ourselves to a separate corner”. Rather, the correct procedure is to mix with discretion, give and take with dignity, speak the truth with love, and show the superiority of faith with humility.<sup>83</sup>

It is interesting to note that prior to Qutb, Abul-‘Ala Mawdudi had stressed that there ought to be an Islāmic revolutionary party whose central task would be to topple the idolatrous governments and wrest power from their representatives. Mawdudi opines that this is a religious obligation incumbent on the community as a whole. Qutb adopted Mawdudi’s idea of political struggle, signaling out lectures on *Jihad in Islām* as one of the most valuable theoretical contributions to contemporary Islāmic thought. In those lectures, Mawdudi called for the establishment of an “international revolutionary party in order to wage *Jihad* against tyrannical governments”. Its members were called “the functionaries of God” and their duty would consist in wiping out “oppression, mischief, strife immorality, high handedness and unlawful exploitation from the world by force of arms”.<sup>84</sup>

## Notes and References:

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## Chapter Five

# **Impact of Sayyid Qutb on Global Islamic Thought**



## IMPACT OF SAYYID QUTB ON GLOBAL ISLĀMIC THOUGHT

More than forty years have passed since Qutb's execution in August 1966, yet he remains the most inspiring thinker especially for the young Muslims in the world today. The impact of his writings on the succeeding Muslim generations has been undoubtedly immense. The observation of Yvonne Haddad is quite remarkable in this connection. According to her, *"A great deal of what is being published at present is either inspired by his (Qutb's) writings, plagiarized from his books or is a commentary on his ideas."*<sup>1</sup> Yonne Ridley expressed a more significant observation in a conference organized by the World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY) in Cairo recently thus: *"Our modern day heroes include those two sixties martyrs Malcolm X and Sayyid Qutb, both whose writings has helped define me as a Muslim these are the sort of role models and influences our youth need to follow..."*<sup>2</sup> Ironically, in the recent past, especially after 11 September 2001 attacks on World Trade Centre, New York and pentagon, Washington D. C, in USA, a barrage of criticism has been unleashed at him by some scholars and journalists, most notably from the US and the West. They have demonized his teachings and labeled him as the "father of extremism". In their view most of the militant movements existing in the world today are inspired by Qutb's ideas. John L. Esposito conceives of him as the *"god-father of extremism"*<sup>3</sup> and *"one man (who) stands out as the architect of radical Islām."*<sup>4</sup>

For the sake of convenience, the Islāmic movements active in the world today and believed to be influenced by the ideas of Qutb may loosely be placed under two categories.

(A) Those which took Qutb's ideas *per se*, and

(B) those which seem to have misinterpreted Qutb's ideas to such an extent that has virtually turned Qutb to be the chief source of modern Islāmic fundamentalist and extremist movements.

In the former category among others, three most popular movements of today, namely *Al-Ikhwān Al-Muslimūn* of Egypt, *Jama'at-e-Islāmi* of the Indian subcontinent and the Palestinian *Hamās* may be included, while in the second category, a galaxy of extremist movements including the offshoots of *Al-Ikhwān*, (in Egypt, Sudan, Syria) *Al-Qāidah*, *Hizb-Allāh* and several others may be included.

### **GROUPS AND MOVEMENTS TAKING QUTB'S IDEAS PER SE**

#### **Al-Ikhwān Al-Muslimūn:**

The *Al-Ikhwān* aims to bring a complete spiritual revival (*nahda*) to society under Islām-----a vision encompassing the moral reformation of youth through physical training, sports, religious and ideological indoctrination, social welfare, national pride, resistance against foreign domination, and the establishment of the state run by Islāmic norms. Its members share an activist ethos critical of traditional Islām, as well as certain pragmatism that sanctions the use of Western ideas and technology as a tool to advance Islām.<sup>5</sup>

*Al-Ikhwān Al-Muslimūn* had a rather humble beginning; it was founded at Hasan al Banna's (1906-1949) house, with six of his friends as the first members, in 1928. Within a period of twenty years, under al-Banna's direct leadership, *Al-Ikhwān Al-Muslimūn* became an international mass movement. In 1948, the organization had over two million members in Egypt, at a time when the country's population was only nineteen million. Institutionally independent organizations bearing the same name, and inspired by the Egyptian model, were started in other Arab states, most notably in Syria and Jordan. In Jordan, the *Al-Ikhwān Al-Muslimūn* contests elections and forms an important part of the country's pseudo-democratic political landscape. Though the movement is illegal in Syria, it is widely believed to enjoy widespread

popular support. The Palestinian outfit *Hamās* also began its life as an offshoot of *Al-Ikhwan*. The *Al-Ikhwan* movement was initially announced as purely religious and philanthropic society that aimed to spread Islāmic morals and good works. With the passage of time and its increasing popularity, the *Al-Ikhwan* became increasingly interested in public affairs, developing a distinctive conception of the comprehensiveness of Islām which contrasted with that of both the established clergy and the existing conventional philanthropic charities. Al-Banna called for a total and activist Islām. He perceived the Islāmic state as a significant ingredient of the desired Islāmic order, but *Al-Ikhwan* leaders did not consider the assumption of political power an imminent possibility at that time. Al-Banna was assassinated by the police on February 12, 1949 and he was succeeded by Ismail Hassan al-Hudaibi (1949-1972) as the Supreme Guide (Murshid-e-‘ām) of the *Al-Ikhwan*.<sup>6</sup> However the vacuum which appeared in the organization because of the departure of Al-Banna was actually fulfilled by Qutb who joined the *Al-Ikhwan* in 1951 and became the most famous theoretician and the chief ideologue of the organization. Through his active involvement and flamboyant writings Qutb left a deep impression on the workers of *Al-Ikhwan* including the Supreme Guides who followed al-Banna.

The *Al-Ikhwan* has so far been led by six Supreme Guides (مرشد عام). All of them shouldered this responsibility ably in their respective periods and they tried to maintain the dynamism and the viability of the Islāmic movement through various means including writing. The first Supreme Guide Hassan al-Banna wrote and delivered speeches pervasively and thereby prodded the Muslims to strive in the way of Islām. The second Supreme Guide Hassan Al-Hudaibi was an expert in law and jurisprudence. His writings, especially his *Daat-ul-Qada* subdued the preachers of tyranny and disbelief.

The third Supreme Guide Umar Tilmisani had been endowed by Allāh with an extraordinary power of observation and experimentation. He too demonstrated an

appreciable spirit of perseverance and sacrifice. His bold stance was liked by the whole Islāmic world. The fourth Supreme Guide Muhammad Hamid Abu Nasr did not write much. However, his work about the atrocities of President Nasser era for the first time brought to light the inner weaknesses of the *Al-Ikhwan* and the intrigues of the hypocrites. The fifth Supreme Guide Mustafa Mashur has written a vast literature on Islām. His writings are adorned with sound arguments.<sup>7</sup> The sixth Supreme Guide of *Al-Ikhwan* was Mamun al – Hudaibi. He died on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2004 at the age of 82. He was succeeded by Muahmmad Akif on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2004. Akif is the present Supreme Guide of *Al-Ikhwan*.

### **Jama‘at-e-Islāmi:**

It is one of the most influential religio-political parties in the Muslim world. It was founded in 1941, mainly because of the efforts of Sayyid Abul-Ala Mawdudi. The party’s goal was to contest the congress (representing Hindu majority) and the *Jam‘iyat-e Ulamā-e Hind* (JUH: aiming for composite nationalism) as well as the *Muslim league* (with territorial nationalism as its platform). In contrast to these other parties, the *Jama‘at-e-Islāmi* echoed the ideas of Mawdudi, who favoured the creation of Islāmic state. Mawdudi was supported by a number of young, activist religious scholars including some Deobandies and Nadwis. Mawdudi was the first *amīr* of the *Jama‘at*, a post he held until 1972.<sup>8</sup> Because of the partition of India, the *Jama‘at* split into *Jama‘at-e-Islāmi* of Pakistan and *Jama‘at-e-Islāmi* of India. The former has remained committed to its aim of creating an Islāmic state while the latter focuses on the dissemination of the pristine teachings of Islām without aiming at the establishment of Islāmic state in India. The *Jama‘at-e-Islāmi Hind* became a separate organization in 1948. Mawlana Abul Laith Nadwi became its first *amīr*. He shouldered this responsibility during a critical period. This was the time when the harsh memories of the partition resonated in the minds of Indian citizens and the country was going through a period of high communal tension between Hindus and

Muslims. Abul Laith led *Jama'at* ably under these adversarial conditions and wrote several books in which he stressed upon the Indian Muslims to adopt a proper conduct in order to prevent the communal tension from getting out of control. Abul Laith is also credited to have established students Islāmic organization as a youth wing of *Jama'at* in 1982. During his period Students Islāmic Movement of India (SIMI) was also established in 1977 and it maintained conventional relations with the *Jama'at*. After Abul Laith, Muahammad Yusuf became the *amīr* of *Jama'at-e-Islāmi Hind* and during his period *Jama'at* became known to the Arab world mainly through the writings of Masud Alam Nadwi.

Sirajul Hassan became the next *amīr* of *Jama'at* and he tried to initiate and improve *Da'wah* activity among the other communities of the country. In this connection, the *Jama'at-e-Islāmi Hind* translated the holy Qur'ān and few selected collections of *Hadith* into nearly all regional languages of the country.

After Sirajul Hasan, the responsibility of *Jama'at's* leadership has been entrusted to 'Abdul Haque Ansari who has been trying to make *Jama'at* take more interest in the political affairs of the country besides trying to improve its performance in other spheres of its activity.

On the other hand during its five decades of existence, the *Jama'at-e-Islāmi* (Pakistan) has gone through a number of purges and reorganizations as well as periods of uncertainty and redirection – none more significant than the transition from one leader to another, The *Jama'at-e-Islāmi* Pakistan, has been led by three *amīrs* and has passed through two succession periods: from Mawdudi (1941-72) to Miyan Tufail Muhammad (1972-87); each such period has engendered reorientation of the party.<sup>9</sup>

When Mawdudi first became active in post partition India and Pakistan, it was through the party that he articulated his political visions and ideas. Only a few years after the creation of Pakistan, the *Jama'at-e-Islāmi* was forced to face the issue of the

role of religion in politics. Mawdudi consistently confronted the Pakistani government on this issue, questioning the state's legitimacy ultimately forcing the politicians to include provisions regarding Islām in the national constitution. The ongoing struggle between the *Jama'at-e-Islāmi* and the government led to the party being outlawed several times. The anti-*Ahamadiyya* movement in 1953-54, however, was the party's ticket into the mainstream of Pakistan politics because by heresizing the *Ahmadiyya* movement, thereby questioning the Islāmicity of state functionaries, the *Jama'at-e-Islāmi* also opened up to other schools of thought.

During the Ayub era (1958-1969), the *Jama'at-e-Islāmi* was forced into the background for a while, until 1965, when it entered into new political alliances against the Ayub regime and, at last, became a proper political party. Its participation in the anti-Bhutto coalition intensified the politicization of the *Jama'at-e-Islāmi*, for it could now call the government un-Islāmic. Eventually the party was able to mobilize a large enough portion of the society to topple the Bhutto regime. It supported Zia ul Haq's *coup d'état* in 1977, and earned leading positions within the government. But the party was unable to widen its social basis, and found itself being used by the government to further its own ends, instead.

Since 1980s, the party has started to diversify its membership, spreading out from Karachi into other areas of the country. It has accomplished this through its welfare programmes, especially in the field of University higher education, and by establishing *madrasas* as well as by working hand in hand with the relief agencies in the Afghan refugee camps after 1979.

In spite of its limited electoral success prior to 1988, the *Jama'at-e-Islāmi* has become a powerful political and cultural force in Pakistan politics.<sup>10</sup> Its current *amir* Qadi Hussain Ahmad has been instrumental in leading it to greater heights as was manifested in the last general elections. The *Jama'at* won greatest number of seats in its history in these elections.

The *Jama'at-e-Islāmi* is strictly and hierarchically organized, under the leadership of its *amīrs*. Party affiliation can be broken down into two categories, fully fledged members (*arkan*) on the one hand, and sympathizers and workers (*karkun*) on the other.

There is a close proximity in the thought pattern of Qutb-the ideologue of *Ikhwan Al-Muslimin* and Mawdudi- the ideologue and founder of *Jama'at-e-Islāmi*. Both of them were prolific writers, journalists and to a lesser extent also political activists, the former in Egypt and the latter in his native India and Pakistan. Their major works continue to be read all over the Islāmic world. Living under very different circumstances, in societies that had little in common except for having been under British colonial rule, these men nevertheless shared certain convictions concerning modern society, and they introduced certain key terms that have since become part and parcel of the Islāmist vocabulary.

Perhaps foremost of these terms was their conception of Sovereignty, which they attributed exclusively to God (*Hakimiyyah*). From His sovereign authority flows the moral and legal code that regulates human affairs. This is the *Shariah* and it is contained in the Qur'ān and *Sunnah*. Every Muslim believer is, thus, able to discover God's law by studying revelation, and is obligated to apply this law to his or her own life. From this perspective, it follows that all human attempts to create rules and laws of their own design are not only futile, but are also illegitimate. Such attempts constitute a heinous sin, for they manifest the human will to set one self up as God's equal, if not as God's rival. Making and following laws other than the *Shariah* is therefore, a sign of heresy and polytheism (*shirk*) and must be dealt with as such. For both Mawdudi and Qutb, contemporary Muslims had neglected their religious duties to such an extent that they had fallen back into a state of ignorance (*Jāhiliyyah*). If this ignorance could be excused at the time before revolution, it is no longer forgivable, for all men and women are now capable of hearing the truth and obeying

the Lord. Contemporary Muslims, therefore, are Muslims by name only. In reality they have renounced Islām and have fallen into unbelief (*Kufr*). Both Qutb and Mawdudi spoke of the possibility to practice *Takfir*, that is, to exclude (“nominal”) Muslims from the community of believers. Yet they were much more reluctant than many of their followers to call for violent measures against these defective Muslims, and were similarly reluctant to propagate *Takfir* and *Jihād* against society as a whole. They did, however, declare un-Islāmic any government that imposed laws and practices not exclusively based on the *Shariah* and insisted on the duty of all true Muslims to fight with all their might for the establishment of an Islāmic order based on the *Shariah*.<sup>11</sup> It is important to note that Qutb had adopted the notions of *Hakimiyyah*, *Jāhiliyyah* and *Takfir* from Mawdudi.

#### **Hamās:**

The organization of Harkat Al-Muqa Wamah Al-Islāmiyah (Movement of Islāmic Resistance), the most important Palestinian Islāmist organization in the occupied West Bank and Gaza strip, is known by its acronym *Hamās*. It was established in Dec. 1987, at the very beginning of the Palestinian uprising (*intifadah*), as the organizational expression of *Al-Ikhwan* participation in the anti-Israel resistance after two decades of Islāmic political quietism. It was created under the initiatives of Abd al-Aziz al-Rantisi, a physician, and of Shakh Ahamad Yassin, a handicapped school master.<sup>12</sup> The *Hamās* was heavily influenced by the ideas of Sayyid Qutb as is vindicated by its adoption of ‘*Jihād*’ programmed against Israel--the Jewish state. In its covenant (*mithaq*), published in August 1988, *Hamās* explains its anti-Israel engagement in terms of *Jihād*, and claims continuity with the *Jihād* of the *Al-Ikhwan* since 1930s. Israel, the state of the Jews who want the destruction of Islām, can not legitimately exist, and the military option as embodied in the ‘*Jihād*’ is the only one available for the liberation of Palestine.<sup>13</sup>



As mentioned earlier, some scholars and journalists especially the western, portray Qutb as the main exponent of the modern fundamentalism in their writings. They trace the ideological link of most of the extremist Islāmic movements' active in different parts of the world today to Qutb. Movements such as Egyptian *Munazzamah al-Tahrir al-Islāmi* (Islāmic liberation organization), *Jama'at al-Islāmi* and *al-Jihād*, Palestinian Islāmic Jihād movement and *Hizb-Allāh*, Armed Islāmic movement of Sudan, *Moro Islāmic liberation front* of Philippines, *Islāmic Salvation Front* of Algeria and the increasingly much infamous Al-Qāidah are considered to have been influenced by Qutb's thought in view of these scholars. How much true this view of theirs is, can be better judged after understanding the working and ideologies of these groups.

#### **Hizb Allāh :**

Hizb Allāh (Hizbollah, Hizbullah) from the Arabic 'Hizb Allāh, or "party of God" became a popular name for political Islāmist groups in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century after Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini of Iran began to use the Quranic phrase (5:56, 58:19-22) to distinguish the righteous from the oppressors. This general usage of *Hizb Allāh* dominated in Iran in the late 1970s, when it was used by those who supported Ayatollah Khomeini in his opposition to the Shah, "the West" and Israel, and in his advocacy of government based on Islām as interpreted by religiously trained legal scholars. Somewhat earlier, a group of *Sunni* political Islāmists in Yemen called themselves *Hizb Allāh*, and later another small *Sunni Hizb Allāh* appeared in Egypt. A faction that broke away from Islāmic Jihād in Palestine during the 1980s, led by Ahmad Muhanna also called itself Hizb Allāh. The Palestinian Hizb Allāh like its parent Islāmic Jihād is military in nature, rejects compromise with Israel, and believes the question of Palestine is fundamentally religious in nature.

However, the term Hizb Allāh is most frequently associated with the Lebanese *Shi'ite* group founded in 1982, following the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. *Shi'ite*

leader Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Fadallah became an out-spoken opponent of Israel, and of 'the West' in general.<sup>14</sup>

Fadallah was influenced by the ideas of Khomeini, Montazari, Shariati, al-Banna, Qutb as well as by Fanon, Friere and even Karl Marx. According to Ibrahim Abu Rabi, "as a post Qutbian thinker Fadallah develops many ideas of Qutb in relation to some contemporary issues facing the Muslim world".<sup>15</sup> Fadallah like Qutb embraces a revolutionary Islāmic world view that does not shy away from resisting oppression and injustice. Moreover, as did Qutb, he believes in the dynamism of the Islāmic mission, and the necessity of the emergence of preachers who might be able to practice this mission. Unlike Qutb, however, he does not believe that Muslim society lives in *Jāhiliyyah*, although he acknowledges that there is a sense of acute predicament that permeates the whole psychological attitude of Muslims. He highlights the motif of oppression at the expense of *Jāhiliyyah* and prepares the ground for a thorough critique of the state of affairs that, to his mind, had been saturated by oppression for many centuries. He believes that change is the solution to the condition of oppression. This calls for the Prophet's method of change at the following levels (1), a gradual dissemination of Islāmic ideas; (2) peaceful method of dissemination without gaining the wrath of the status quo; (3) a personal method of dissemination; (4) emigration in case religion is under siege and attack, with emigration meaning safety, metamorphosis, and general breakdown of society; and (5) a determined and committed attitude that has breadth of patience and knowledge. One must realize mobile and practical conceptual bases.<sup>16</sup>

## GROUPS AND MOVEMENTS SUPPOSED TO HAVE MISINTERPRETED QUTB'S IDEAS

### **Munazzamah al-Tahrir al-Islāmi (Islāmic liberation organization):**

It is also known as Shabāb- e- Muhammad (Muhammad's youth). In the Arab mass media, it is called *Jama'at Fanniyah al-Askariyya* (The Technical Military Academy). It was founded by Shaykh Taqiuddin al-Nabhani (d.1973) after 1967. The organization followed the fundamentalist ideas of al-Bannah and Qutb. The organization advocated strict obligation of five pillars of Islām and viewed Egyptian ruling order as being corrupt and humbled by the West, Israel and Soviet Union. It regarded government as its main enemy and therefore, centered its attacks on it. After the death of al Nabhani, Salih 'Abdullah Siriyya took over the leadership responsibility of this organization. He was also Palestinian by birth but became a citizen of Iraq. He was a modern educated with PhD in science. In his mid-thirties he became the member of *Al-Ikhwan* branch in Jordan known as Islāmic liberation party (*Hizb al-Tahrir al-Islāmi*).<sup>17</sup> That is why Islāmic liberation organization (I.L.O) is said to be an offshoot of *Al-Ikhwan*. I.L.O recruited young worshippers from mosques, students from universities and colleges mostly belonging to Cairo, Alexandria and the Delta. It relied on friendship and worship. Saad Eddin Ibrahim writes that the ideology of I.L.O was dominantly influenced by the writings of al-Banna, Qutb, Mawdudi and Ali Shariati.<sup>18</sup> There are five main aspects of this ideology.

1. Islām is the only proper and right path to be followed by man in every field of life. There is no god but Allāh. Like other militant organizations, I.L.O also would not tolerate Judaism and Christianity (the people of the book).
2. Both the individual and the society should possess righteousness and the *Shariah* should rule the society.

3. Islāmic societies e.g. Egypt, Jordan etc are weak before the external enemies such as Christian West, Jewish Zionism and Atheistic Communism because they do not follow and implement the *Shariah*. I.L.O condemns the political system of Egypt as its leaders are ‘God-fearless’.
4. *Ulamā* are not sincere and God fearing. They are delivering the sermons like the propagandists of the government. In this way, they are corrupting Islām. I.L.O described *Ulamā* as “*babaghawat al-manaber*” (pulpit parrots), whom pity rather anger should be felt.
5. I.L.O engaged itself in *Jihād* for the re-Islāmization of the society. One, who shows dedication to this cause, will achieve martyrdom, the reward for which is paradise.

Consequently I.L.O rejected western thinking and non-Islāmic institutions and advocated the re-organization of the society on the basis of *Shariah*.<sup>19</sup>

#### **Jama’at-Al-Muslimin:**

This radical Islāmic group was generally called *Al-Takfir wa al-Hijrah* by the Arab mass media and the government security agencies. It was founded and led in 1971 as an offshoot of *Al-Ikhwan* by Shukri Mustfa, a member of the *Al-Ikhwan* in Asyut. He had been imprisoned in 1965 and had joined the disciples of Qutb. He was greatly influenced by the ideas of Qutb, particularly by his radical ideas contained in his work *Milestones*. The very name “*Al-Takfir wa al-Hijrah*” is translated to mean “excommunication and migration” and is indicative of the group’s radical ideology which emphasizes a complete withdrawal from the modern society, seen as treacherous anti-Islāmic culture. This ideology actually originated with the account of Qutb in his book, *Milestones*. In this work, Qutb described Egypt as being ridden with *Jāhiliyyah* and said that the truly pious Muslims must detach themselves from society and create isolated Islāmic enclaves that would provide for the true practices of Muhammad (SAW). The most powerful declaration of this stream of Islāmism

was the aggressive call to arms through *Jihād* that would suppress the ‘infidels’ once and for all. After the demise of Sayyid Qutb, his followers disputed over the interpretation of this book and later split into different factions, each advancing its own interpretation. The formal split in the *Al-Ikhwan* occurred during the 1967 six day war between Egypt and Israel, when Nasser’s government pressurized *Al-Ikhwan* prisoners to express solidarity with Egypt in order to strengthen their public support for the war. Several mainstream majority members of the *Al-Ikhwan* complied. A minority of *Al-Ikhwan* members, who were devoted to the doctrine of Qutb, refused to express support for the war because they felt that without a complete Islāmization of Egypt, a military front would be obsolete. Qutb’s followers however, divided----- felt that the most urgent enemy was a secular Egypt that was in their eyes corrupt and sacrilegious.<sup>20</sup>

These developments towards the latter half of the 1960’s have set the stage for the creation of *Jama’at al-Muslimun* (Muslim society). It became formally known as *Al-Takfir wa Al-Hijra* after the group became publicly recognized through the Egyptian media. Shukri Mustafa, one of the original descendants of *Al-Ikhwan* and who led *Jama’at al-Muslimun*, was heavily influenced by the radical ideas of Sayyid Qutb. In fact after the departure of Qutb, he adopted a yet more radical interpretation of Qutb’s ideas. In 1971 after taking the central command of *Jama’at al-Muslimun*, Musthafa executed a policy of strict rejectionism and *Jihād* against secular Egyptian society under president al-Sadat. It is interesting to note that the Egyptian referred to the *Jama’at-Al-Muslimun* by the label of *Al-Takfir wa Al-Hijra* because of its symbolic meaning. *Takfir* is the legal ascription of unbelief (excommunication) to an individual or a group, while *Hijra* signifies Muhammad’s (SAW) migration from Mecca to Medina, serving as a model for contemporary disentanglement from the corrupt society and regime of the Egypt. Shukri Mustafa contended that, as the contemporary society was infidel, *Takfir* would set up its own alternative community

that would work, study and pray together. As a result, *Takfir wa Al-Hijra* became a highly disciplined organization, divided into action cells, recruiting groups and logistic units. There were gradations of membership--- full members devoted themselves totally to the community, leaving their jobs and family. Errant members were excommunicated and punished.<sup>21</sup>

### **Al-Jihād**

The main ideologue of *Al-Jihād* was Muhammad Abd Al-Salam Faraj, a former *Al-Ikhwan* member who was disillusioned by its passivity. After belonging to a series of radical groups, he founded *Al-Jihād* in 1979. To explain his views, which bear an unambiguous imprint of Qutb's views, Faraj wrote a pamphlet *Al-Faridah-al-Gai'bah* (The Neglected Duty). But *Al-Jihād* did not restrict itself to theory alone. It quickly became involved in sectarian conflicts and disturbances in Upper Egypt and Cairo. In October 1981, it assassinated Sadat at a military parade. In contrast to *al Takfir wa Al-hijrah*, *Al-Jihād* was not led by one charismatic leader but by a collective leadership.<sup>22</sup> It built up a sophisticated organization run by a leadership apparatus in charge of overall strategy, as well as a ten-member consultation committee (*majlis Al-shura*) headed by Shaikh Umar Abd Al-Rahman. Everyday operations were run by a three department supervisory apparatus.<sup>23</sup>

As a chief ideologue of *Al-Jihād*, Al-Faraj described the establishment of Islāmic state and the restoration of *Khilāfah* as the duty of every Muslim in his monograph "*The Neglected Duty*". The monograph has been reprinted in many places and circulated throughout the world among Muslim communities. The monograph is generally prefaced by a quotation from Qutb. In this monograph, Al-Faraj seeks to push the thoughts of Qutb in particular to their logical conclusion. He maintained that *Jihād* is the sixth pillar of Islām, which had been often forgotten or obscured by the Ulamā and majority of Muslims.<sup>24</sup> "*Jihād*... for God's cause in spite of its importance for the future religion has been neglected by the Ulamā... of this

age....There is no doubt that the idols of this world can only disappear through the power of the sword”.<sup>25</sup> As in the time of Muhammed (S.A.W) Faraj maintained, this was the task of minority vanguard who must be prepared to fight against unbelief and apostasy, prepared to suffer and die for their faith. Looking at the state of *Ummah*, and especially Muslim governments, he concluded unbelief and apostasy were endemic disease:

“The rulers of this age are in apostasy from Islām. They were raised at the tables of imperialism, be it Crusaderism or Communism or Zionism. They carry nothing from Islām but their names, even though they pray and fast and claim to be Muslims”.<sup>26</sup>

The punishment for their apostasy is loss of all rights, including their right to life. Given the authoritarian and corrupt nature of regimes and their societies, a true Islāmic state could not be established through non-violence but only through radical surgery, militant *Jihād*. “We have to establish the rule of God’s religion in our own country first, and to make the word of God Supreme....There is no doubt that the first battlefield for *Jihād* is the extermination of these infidel leaders and to replace them by a complete Islāmic order.”<sup>27</sup> *The Neglected Duty* may be summed up in following points:

- (1) The duty of every Muslim is to strive for Islāmic *Ummah*. This is a duty ordained by Allāh. Since the laws of Muslim countries are the laws of unbelievers (*Kuffar*), the true Muslims must declare holy war against their leaders who are trained in the West by Christians, Communists and Zionists.
- (2) Muslim leaders or groups who reject the laws of Islām must be considered apostates (*murtadd*) despite their claims that they are Muslims. In other words, “Muslimness” has to be constantly validated since a sinful individual shall lose his status as a Muslim if he persists in his sinfulness. Apostasy is the highest level of sinfulness.

- (3) Co-operation with an infidel ruler who claims to be a Muslim is sin. The punishment for such a leader is death even if he is unable to defend himself. The Muslims should refrain from government work and military service.
- (4) Perpetual *Jihād* against an infidel state is the highest obligation (pillar) and only solution for all true Muslims who desire to destroy Jāhilī society and revive Islām.
- (5) Armed struggle is only acceptable form of *Jihād*.
- (6) *Jihād* pursued by peaceful means through rhetoric Islāmic parties or emigration (*hijrah*) is considered cowardice and stupidity. Islām can succeed only through the force of arms as it did in the past when a small group of earliest believers were able to spread the message through conquest. Thus, true Muslims should engage in *Jihād* even if they are few in number.
- (7) First fight the internal infidel (the Egyptian state) then the external infidel (the non Islāmic world).
- (8) Every Muslim without great effort or education can study *Jihād*. Thus the lack of knowledge is no excuse to abstain from *Jihād*.
- (9) Leadership in Islām must be granted to the strongest among the believers, who also has more fear (*taqwa*) of Allāh. He must be chosen collectively and once chosen, must be obeyed. An arrogant and haughty scholar should not be the leader.
- (10) Abstaining from *Jihād* is the main reason for the sorry situation of the Muslims today---humiliated, degraded, disdained and divided.
- (11) Allāh has designated five periods in Islāmic history:
  - (a) the *Ummah* under the prophet (SAW)
  - (b) the *Ummah* under the caliphs,
  - (c) the *Ummah* under the kingdoms,
  - (d) the *Ummah* under the dictatorships,



- (e) The Islām of our time when dictatorship and tyranny will be overthrown and the ‘*Ummah*’ shall become controlled by a system similar to the prophet’s community, and peace will reign.<sup>28</sup>

*Al Jihād* maintained that the rulers are servants of imperialism and have given up Islām, which lead them towards infidelity so it is the need of the hour and the duty of every Muslim to struggle against these evil rulers, to restore the glory of Islām and establish rule of the Almighty Allāh on His land. Al-Faraj opines that *Jihād* is the duty of every Muslim.<sup>29</sup> He argues that it is the duty of every Muslim to struggle for the sake of God. Islāmic state once established will be indestructible because it is God’s will. Islāmic laws are sufficient and universal. There is the solution of each and every problem beginning with ablution to governance. It is worth subjugating the corrupt people who go against the will of God. Islām teaches equality and justice so it will be welcomed by every one (Muslims and non-Muslims).<sup>30</sup>

The main objective of *Al-Jihād* was to establish Islāmic rule in the country and to practice Islām in every field of life, political as well as social. Those who would oppose their ideas were treated as unbelievers and enemies of Islām, who should be severely punished. *Al-Jihād* wanted the change from the top to the bottom i.e., infidel rulers should be changed and true Muslims appointed *Khulafa* so that they could implement the *Shariah* and rule according to it, which would definitely bring an Islāmic revolution as happened in Iran in 1979.<sup>31</sup>

As already mentioned, another prominent figure associated with *Al-Jihād* was the Egyptian religious scholar Umar Abd al-Rahman. He too was greatly influenced by the writings of Sayyid Qutb. He used to preach at Fayyum in Upper Egypt where he was appointed by the government as the mosque preacher. At a public ceremony after Nasser’s death on 28 September 1970, he condemned Nasser as an infidel and prohibited prayers for him. As a result he was detained by the government for eight months. He was again arrested toward the beginning of 1980’s for his involvement in

the fundamentalist *Jihād* organization accused of assassinating President Anwar al-Sadat. He was accused of leading the organization and of participating in the organization but was acquitted on both counts and released in 1984.

During this protracted trial (1981-1984), three factors led to Abd al-Rahman's emergence as the leading figure in his Islāmist movement. The first was his book *Mithaq al-Amil-Islāmi* (charter of Islāmic action), an explanation of his view of correct Islāmic life; it marked his departure from the more moderate wing of *Al-Ikhwan* and affiliation with the radical forces informed by the concept of *Jihād* and the necessity to overthrow the secular state in order to restore the principles of Quran. Second, he married for the second time to Fā'tin Shu'ayb, a kinswoman of several important activists, affirming his solidarity with the *Jama āh al-Islāmīyah* in upper Egypt and lending weight to his religious status as *Mufti-al-Jihād*. Third, most of the major leaders of the organization were executed or imprisoned for life, leaving a power vacuum that Abd al-Rahman readily filled.

During the decade that followed, Abd al-Rahman came to be portrayed by his political opponents and the media as the high priest of radical fundamentalism both in and outside Egypt. In 1990, he emigrated to the U.S, where he was alleged to have inspired his followers to bomb the W.T.C. in New York City in 1993.<sup>32</sup>

#### Islāmic Jihād movement:

Two groups have the name Islāmic Jihād (sometimes called the organization of the Islāmic Jihād), one Egyptian and the other Palestinian. These two movements contend that armed struggle is the Islāmically ordained form of striving against a corrupt authoritarian regime of Egypt and military occupation in Palestine. Both were influenced by the teachings of *Al-Ikhwan*, especially by that of al- Banna and Qutb. The Palestinian Islāmic Jihād movement (Harkat al *Jihād* al Islāmi) was founded by Fathi al-Shiqaqi and Abd al-Aziz Auda in 1981. Both studied in Egypt and were

influenced by the teachings of Egyptian radical Islāmists. Another inspiration was Iranian revolution.<sup>33</sup>

In fact Sayyid Qutb is one of the three most cited authors in the literature of Islāmic Jihād. The Islāmic Jihād believes that society is in a state of *Jāhiliyya*. Fathi al-Shiqaqi cited Sayyid Qutb's *Milestones* as "one of the important works in modern Islāmic literature" and in accordance with Qutb's call for vanguard, referred to the organization early in its history as the "Islāmic vanguard". Shiqaqi has explained with respect to suicide bombers: "*As to Sayyid Qutb, his influence on our generation is beyond dispute...*"<sup>34</sup>

The main goal of this organization is the liberation of Palestine, as the central issue for Muslims, and the establishment of an Islāmic state. The group carried out several violent attacks against Israel prior to the first *intifada* (1987-1993), in which it was active. Israel retaliated by expelling, arresting and even assassinating some of its activists including Shiqaqi, who was murdered by Mossad (the Israeli secret service) in October 1995. Since the establishment of *Hamās* in 1988, Islāmic Jihād has lost some of its appeal. But since the outbreak of second *intifada* in September 2000, the *Jihād* has taken active part in fighting occupation forces and assailing Israeli civilians.<sup>35</sup>

### **Moro Islāmic Liberation Front:**

It emerged in 1977 after the split of MORO National Liberation Front (MNLF), which was formed in 1969 to safeguard Moro (Philippine Muslim) interests and cultural identity, by a group of young, progressive Moros headed by Nur Misuari, a former student activist at the University of Philippines.<sup>36</sup> The formation of the MNLF was in response the historical manifestation of religious and political animosity and Muslim minority in the Philippines. The Moro Islāmic Liberation Front has been fighting a bloody secessionist war in the area known as Bangsamoro. In an interview with an Islāmist publication, the MILF's leader, Salamat Hashim

called for the Islāmization of all aspects of life of the Bangsamoro people. The interviewing correspondent notes that Qutb and Mawdudi are the two writers who made a lasting impression on Salamat. However, it was Qutb's writings which shaped his Islāmic outlook and political beliefs. The impact of Qutb and Mawdudi was what inspired him to plant the seeds of Islāmic revolution in the Bangsamoro homeland.<sup>37</sup>

### **Islāmic Salvation Front:**

The Islāmic Salvation Front is the Islāmist political party of Algeria. It was formed mainly due to the efforts of Abbāsī Madani, well known Algerian Islāmic activist. Madani announced the establishment of Islāmic Salvation Front (known by its French initials FIS)

As an education specialist, Madani has written studies on pedagogy and philosophy and contributed numerous articles to the FIS's periodicals *Al-Munqidh* and *Al-Furqan* reflecting the concerns of an Islāmic modernist, he attempts to delineate the nature of the Islāmic solution to the crisis of modern societies. Madani holds that contemporary western thought suffers from the ideological and moral predicaments that have emanated from a misperception of the incompatibility of science and religion. Like many other Islāmic revivalist intellectuals, he regards Islām as a humanistic and universal message that presents a worldview counter to western ideologies.

Madani is also known for his moderation and political skills. He managed to integrate into his party several Islāmic groups with various orientations; in a relatively short time he transformed the FIS into a potent political force in Algeria.<sup>38</sup> Co-leader and principal orator for the Islāmic Salvation Front was Ali Benhadj. Benhadj wanted the seclusion of women in the home 'except under conditions provided by the law. He opposed man made laws because according to him they distort the life of community and are the official face of *Jāhiliyyah*'. He wanted

Islāmic law. He defined the democratic idea as ‘pernicious’ and the concept of democracy as ‘strange to the Arab language’. Benhadj said that ‘freedom is tied to obedience to the Shariah....’ He also identified journalists, authors, artists and secular political parties as obstacles to the creation of a just government.<sup>39</sup>

#### **Al-Qāidah:**

Literally meaning “the foundation” or “the base”, Al-Qāidah is known to be a radical organization that arose in the last quarter of the 20th century to oppose the military and economic intervention of non-Muslim states in predominantly Muslim lands. It drew the attention of the public in the world mainly in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 attacks on World Trade Center in New York City and the pentagon in Washington DC, which killed more than three thousand people. The broader association of Al-Qāidah and its leader, Usama bin Laden, with terrorism was immediate and pervasive in media coverage and political discourse in America and elsewhere.

*Al-Qāida* was the first of the militant Islāmist organizations to operate on a global scale. Its ideological founder was ‘Abdullah Azzam, a Palestinian born in 1941. Azzam grew up under Israeli occupation of his homeland. He earned a doctorate in *Shariah* studies (*Fiqh*) at Azhar University in Cairo, after which he taught in various Middle Eastern universities.<sup>40</sup> It is at the Al-Azhar University in early 1970s that Azzam is said to have developed friendship with the family of Sayyid Qutb, Sheikh Umar Abd al-Rahman and Ayman al-Zawahiri. He became a lecturer at Amman University but was obliged to leave due to his radical views and resumed his academic career as lecturer at ‘Abdul Aziz University, Saudi Arabia, where he influenced a generation of Saudis, including Usama bin Laden. Azzam had connections with Yasser Arafat and is said to have a role in founding *Hamās*.<sup>41</sup>

However, he broke with the Palestinian struggle on the basis that it was polluted with secular national liberation ideology, rather than being purely Islāmic.

The pan-Islāmic ideal was important to Azzam, for whom the geographic borders that were drawn up by the non-Muslims between Muslim countries were part of a conspiracy to prevent the *Ummah* from realizing the potential of trans-national Islāmic state. When the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan, Azzam produced a *fatwa*, ‘defence of the Muslim lands’, and had it approved by high ranking clerics including Saudi Arabia’s grand *mufti*, Abd al-Aziz bin Bazz. The *fatwa* declared that killing *Kuffar* in those countries was *fard ayn* (personal obligation) for all Muslims.<sup>42</sup> In 1984 Azzam and Usama bin Laden established the Afghan service Bureau front, known by its Arabic acronym M.A.K (*Maktab al-Khidma li-l-Mujahdin al-Arab*, literally, office for service for Arab freedom fighters). Among the services they provided was keeping track of young Muslim males who joined the cause from the countries around the world, particularly from Arab countries like Saudi Arabia and Egypt, and they apparently provided relief services to those who were wounded and to the families of those killed in battle. Very soon thereafter M.A.K began to recruit, indoctrinate and train its volunteers in effective resistance methods, including terrorist tactics. M.A.K soon came to be known as *Al-Qāidah* during the Afghan war.<sup>43</sup>

Azzam held a particularly hard-line doctrine of *Jihād* which according to his understanding of the Qur’ān and *Sunnah* of the prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) required militant opposition to Islām’s perceived enemies.<sup>44</sup> He was greatly influenced by the war in Afghanistan and became the rallying cry to invite Muslims all over the world to join this ‘*Jihād*’. Azzam’s writings urge the Muslims to develop a strong desire to die and achieve martyrdom. His book *Join the Caravan* actually invited Muslims to join the caravan of martyrs going to heaven from Afghanistan. Azzam argued that once a Muslim land is occupied by non-Muslims, *Jihād* becomes an obligation for every Muslim man. However, he made four exceptions regarding people who were exempted from participating in Afghan war. First those who had a

family and were the sole providers for their families, second those persons who were unable to obtain a visa to travel to Pakistan third, those who were denied passports by their government, and fourth, those who were responsible to take care of their old parents.<sup>45</sup>

Azam divided the concept of *Jihād* into offensive and defensive *Jihād* with the latter taking precedence over the former. In his opinion, the defensive *Jihād* is waged to expel non-Muslims from a Muslim land or to liberate Muslims in bondage. An offensive *Jihād* is waged to bring the world into the fold of Islām but it can only be waged when there is no requirement to wage a defensive *Jihād*. However, Azzam made it clear that it was compulsory for a Muslim leader to initiate a defensive *Jihād* and in the absence of a requirement for a defensive *Jihād*, an offensive *Jihād* must be waged at least once a year to ‘terrorize’ the opponents of Islām.<sup>46</sup>

Following the teachings of Qutb, Azzam also believed that every movement needed a vanguard that would lead the ideology it upholds into the society. He argued that no ideology could succeed without this vanguard that must lead the way through the hardest of times and thus inspire others and motivate them to join in. He therefore, termed Al-Qāidah to be that vanguard for the new society he aspired to create. Here Azzam can be seen following the step by step strategy advocated by Qutb. Azzam finally defined this ideology in an article printed in *Al-Jihād* and laid the guiding principles for Al-Qāida, his vanguard. He advocated that:

The vanguard must jump into the fire of the toughest tests and into the wave of fierce trials.

The training leadership shares with them the testing march, the sweat and the blood. The leadership is like motherly warmth of a hen whose chicks grow under its wings, throughout the long period of hatching and training.

The vanguard has to abstain from cheap worldly pleasures and must bear its distinct stamp of abstinence and frugality.

In the like manner, it must be endowed with firm belief and trust in the ideology, instilled with a hoe in victory.

There must be a strong insistence on continuing the march, no matter how long it takes.

Travel provisions are amongst the most important items on this march. The provisions consist of mediation, patience, prayer, loyalty and devotion.

They must be aware of the existence of anti-Islāmic machinations all over the world

These guidelines became the hallmark of Al-Qāida ideology and these qualities can be seen in its membership which is significant proof of faith in this ideology and their conviction of being a vanguard for creating a new social order. However, Azzam was not an advocate of indiscriminate killings of unarmed civilians. His concept of *Jihād* was close to the conventional definition of an armed struggle against the military of the enemy.<sup>47</sup>

After Azzam's controversial assassination, Usama bin Laden became the flag bearer and a symbol of this struggle. Born in Saudi Arabia in 1957 in a wealthy family, bin Laden went to Afghanistan when Soviet Union invaded it in 1979. Here he met several leaders of *Jihād* movements who were mounting resistance efforts against the Russians on behalf of the Afghani Muslims. He joined forces with 'Abdullah Azzam to recruit non- Afghan Muslims, mainly Arabs, and to raise money and purchase weapons for an armed resistance against the Soviet military. Their collaboration led to growth and success of Al-Qāida.<sup>48</sup> Usama was different from other Arab militants. His ideology was not limited to hate for Israel but was more pan-Islāmic in nature. The war in Afghanistan had a profound effect on him and he considered it to be a spiritual experience where the myth of super power was shattered in front of him and his companions who fought with him.



According to bin Laden “the acme of this religion is *Jihād*”. However, the definition of *Jihād* in the ideology of Al-Qāida has been limited to an armed struggle against the infidels.

Sayyid Qutb’s influence on Usama bin Laden came to be increasingly recognized, especially by the orientalist in the aftermath of the 11 September attacks on world trade centre in New York, USA. In fact, since then Sayyid Qutb has been popularized as the intellectual grand father to Usama bin Ladin. This argument is substantiated by the fact that the two individuals who were the greatest influence on Bin Laden---‘Abdullah Azzam and militant Saudi cleric Safar al-Hawali---were steeped in Sayyid Qutb’s writings.<sup>49</sup>

Another important influence in the Al-Qāida network organizations is Ayman al-Zawahiri, an Egyptian physician who joined the radical Al- Jama‘a al-Islāmiyya (Islāmic Group) and affiliated with bin Laden during his late twentieth and early twenty-first century.<sup>50</sup> Like bin Laden, al-Zawahiri was born into a well connected, established family, part of his country’s (Egypt’s) elite. Al-Zawahiri came into contact with Muhammad Qutb, brother of Sayyid Qutb and with ‘Abdullah Azzam, the ideological founder of al-Qāida while studying medicine at Cairo’s al-Azhar University.<sup>51</sup> Al-Zawahiri also claims to have known Abd al-Salam al-Faraj personally: the doctor eventually became one of the leaders of Egyptian *Jihād* groups, Islāmic Jihād. He met bin Laden in Peshawar Pakistan, during the guerilla campaign against the Soviets. The two collaborated closely, al-Zawahiri contributing his skills as an ideologist, bin Laden his organizational talents and financial resources. The two publicly announced the merger of their groups in 1998, completing al Qaida’s development into the group that challenges even the US today.

Today al-Zawahiri remains bin laden’s deputy as a leader of al-Qāida and his writings provide the best insight into the al-Qāida’s current strategic thinking. In his 2001 book *Knights under the prophet’s Banner*, al-Zawhiri identifies and prioritizes

the goals of what he calls “the revolutionary fundamentalist movement”: first achievement of ideological coherence and organization, then struggle against the existing regimes of the Muslim world, followed by the establishment of a ‘genuinely’ Muslim state “at the heart of the Arab world”. Zawahiri views the current stage of the *Jihād* as one of world wide, revolutionary struggle, to be waged by means of violence political action, and propaganda against the secular Muslim regimes and secular Muslim elites.<sup>52</sup> Qutb’s enormous influence on Al-Qāida and the radical Islāmist movements has been acknowledged in the memories of al-Zawahiri. Sayyid Qutb is described as the most prominent theoretician of the fundamentalist movements who said “Brother, push ahead, for your path is soaked in blood. Do not turn head right or left but look only up to heaven”. Zawahiri notes that “Qutub’s call for faith in God’s oneness, for submission to His sole authority and sovereignty was the spark that inflamed the Islāmic revolution against Islām’s enemies throughout the world”.<sup>53</sup> ‘The bloody chapters of this revolution continue to unfold day after day’. Al-Zawahiri writes that Sayyid Qutb: “affirmed that the issue of unification in Islām is important and that the battle between Islām and its enemies is primarily an ideological one over the issue of unification. It is also a battle over to whom authority and power should belong---to God’s course and *Shariah*, to man made laws and material principles, or to those who claim to be intermediaries between the Creator and mankind.

This affirmation greatly helped the Islāmic movement to know and define its enemies. It also helped it to realize that the internal enemy was not less dangerous than the external enemy and a screen behind which it hid to launch its war on Islām.

The group rallying around Sayyid Qutb decided to deal blows to the existing (Egyptian) government in its capacity as a regime that was hostile to Islām and which departed from the course of God and refused to apply the *Shariah*.

The group's plan was simple. It did not aim to overthrow the regime or to create vacuum of power but to deal to the regime preventive, defensive and retaliatory blows if it planned a new campaign of repression against Muslims.

However, the meaning of this plan was more important than its material strength. The meaning was that the Islāmic movement had begun a war against the regime in its capacity as an enemy of Islām. Before that, the Islāmic movement's ethics and principles- and in which some believe until now- affirmed that external enemy was the only enemy of Islām.

Although the Nasserite regime (in power from 1952-1970) tortured and maltreated Qutb's group, it failed to stop the growing influence of this group among the Muslim Youth.

...Qutb played a key role in directing the Muslim youth to this road in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Egypt in particular and Arab region in general".<sup>54</sup>

Zawahiri notes that Sayyid Qutb's words acquired greater dimensions than those of any other scholar because of his execution. He 'became an example of sincerity and adherence to justice... and paid his life as a price for this'. The Egyptian regime made the mistake of thinking "that Islāmic movement received a deadly blow with the execution of Sayyid Qutb and his comrades and the arrest of thousands of Islāmic movement members. However, Qutb's ideas and calls were the beginning of the formation of the nucleus of the modern Islāmic Jihād movement in Egypt".<sup>55</sup>

### **SOME RECENT OBSERVATIONS**

In an article titled "Creating Islāmist phantoms", published by The Hindu 31 August 2005, Adam Crutis expresses apprehension at the western attempt to deal with the evil ideology of Islāmism and its role in inspiring 7/7/2005 terrorist attacks in London. He feels unease about "whether this response is right or will be effective in stopping future attacks".

To him “there is an even more serious fear that the West might be making the situation worse” and he believes “this was exactly what happened in the reaction to the attacks on America in 2001. “Last year”, Crutis goes on to write in the article, “I made a series of documentaries for the BBC “The power of Nightmares” which showed how a fantasy image of the Al-Qāida organization was created. The films told how the response to shocking event of 11 September 2001 swung out of control and the threat became exaggerated to a dangerous level.

The “power of Nightmares” said bluntly that this was a fantasy. The real threat came out, Crutis deeply analyses, not from a network but from individuals and groups linked only by an idea. According to him, the whole energy was going into fighting a phantom enemy. The analyst then discusses about the London Bombings and finds out the reality that all the “terror experts” basically changed their tone. For three years, they told the people breathlessly about a terrifying global network. Now suddenly, it was replaced by an “evil ideology” that inspires young angry Muslim men in their own society.

Adam Crutis is worried about the method applied by the western governments in hunting the terrorism that the idea will be simplified, exaggerated and distorted just as the network was and that in this process the governments will bring their policies that will alienate young Muslims further and drive them towards dangerous extremism.

Crutis sees Islāmism as a complex political movement with a history that goes back more than 50 years. According to him, the most influential ideologist of Islāmism was Sayyid Qutb. In the 1950s Qutb wrote a series of books that put forward a powerful critique of modern Western culture and democracy and called for a new type of utopian society in Muslim lands in which Islām would play a central role.

Out of this has come a movement for revolutionary change in the Islāmic world that includes an extra-ordinary range of groupings and variations on Qutb's original arguments.

Crutis thinks that it is only a tiny minority in the Islāmist movement who has developed these ideas into a politics that advocates terrorism against the West. Historians of Islāmism have shown that this minority grouped initially around Usama bin-Laden and Ayman al- Zawahiri in the late 1990s turned to attacking the West only because of the failure of the wider movement to achieve its revolutionary aims in the Muslim world.

Crutis necessarily differentiates between political Islāmism and terrorist tendencies so as "to avoid a witch-hunt against the whole Islāmist movement". He explicitly says:

"We may not agree with its reactionary vision of political use of Islām and the pessimistic, anti- progressive beliefs that lie at the heart of Qutb's teachings but it is essential to realize that there is no inherent link between these ideas and terrorism. There are worrying signs that journalists are confusing the murderous beliefs of a genuinely destructive minority with the political ideas of a much wider movement. By lumping Islāmism into a frightening violent, anti-western movement led by the "preachers of hate", they risk exaggerating and distorting the threat again, he honestly concludes.<sup>56</sup>

Ibrahim Abu Rabi too finds lacunae in the western treatment of Islāmism. In an insightful review of John L Esposito's *Unholy War: Terror in the name of Islām*, Abu Rabi claims that the main problem to be addressed is the method. "Do we treat Islāmism as a phenomenon or do we approach it through the writings of few select individuals"?

According to him, for gaining an adequate understanding of Islāmism, "One needs to state that (i) far from monolithic; Islāmism is a multilayered phenomenon in

the Muslim world. It is not purely religious phenomenon. (ii) It is possible to delineate several phases of Islāmism; Pre-colonial, colonial and post colonial. (iii) Islāmism is the product of the major factors affecting the Muslim world in the past two centuries or so. (iv) Islāmism in large measure is the product of modern European colonialism in the Muslim world and the failure of the modern nation – state to accommodate protest movements in their political systems. (v) The relationship between Islāmism and the state in the Muslim world has been complex. In the case of Wahabism, Islāmism and the state have been allied, whereas in other cases, Islāmism and state have been at odds. The state in the Modern Muslim world is a 19th century creation prompted by European colonialism. (vi) As such, Islāmism has never been a static phenomenon. It has invented a powerful religious discourse to legitimize itself in the eyes of the masses and gain political and economic support. (vii) Islāmism has been in crisis for the last four decades for many complex reasons; first because the whole of Muslim tradition has been in crisis and second, because the new guard of Islāmism is not satisfied with the achievements or lack thereof on the part of the old guard. This is true in the case of Wahabism, and bin Laden is an example”.

Therefore, Abu Rabi argues, “One must analyze Islāmism or any other political or social movement in the Muslim world or the third world for that matter, in the context of the relationship between the Muslim world and the West since the dawn of colonialism. According to him , ‘this context is more important when one investigates the post second World War climate in the world, the decline of traditional European colonial powers, the rise of the U.S to a new colonial reality, and the rise of independent movements in the third world”.

Abu Rabi notes that, “overall since the 1940s, the U.S has not favoured in any financial or political sense any truly democratic regime or any regime trying to chart an independent nationalist course. On the contrary, the U.S fought against many

democratically elected regimes in the last half century. The collapse of Soviet system and the American intervention in the Gulf in 1990 did not change the picture. For a while, the U.S has supported authoritarian regimes across the globe. Many of the political elite in the Muslim world, who found their anchor in American support to their decadent regimes, have diligently served American interests. That is why *Jihād* is the last thing on the minds of these political elites.”

Ironically, Esposito, Abu Rabi laments, “fails to establish this context.” According to him, Esposito’s “main flaw is that he assumes that Islāmism is the product of ideas, most specifically, the idea of *Jihād*”. That is why, Abu Rabi writes, “he gives us a long detours into fourteen centuries of Islāmic history to convince us that the terrorist attacks against the U.S on September 11, 2001 were the product of *Jihād* ideology and the ideology of Islām itself.” To prove his point, Esposito goes on to analyze the worldview of Usama bin Laden whom he calls “master or global terrorist”. Bin-Laden is driven by both his hatred of the U.S and the ideology of *Jihād* he grew up within puritanical (*Wahabi*) Saudi Arabia. This *Jihād* ideology can be traced to Sayyid Qutb and ‘Abdullah Azam”. Abu Rabi contends that Esposito’s obsession with the idea of *Jihād* and his failure to look at the context and the condition in which Sayyid Qutb wrote leads him to the erroneous and disappointing conclusion that Qutb is the “god-father of Muslim extremist movements”.

According to him on the whole, Esposito’s discussion of Islāmism is “disjointed historically shallow and intellectually unconvincing”. Abu Rabi wonders that “it would have been better to discuss contemporary Islāmism in a number of Muslim countries against the back ground of the exhaustion of the nation-state, the corruption of the political elite, the increasing gaps between poor and rich in the Muslim world and the role of globalization especially as led by U.S multinational corporations”.

Abu Rabi holds that Esposito's obsession with *Jihād* leads him "to dismiss such factors as state oppression, economic disparities, American intervention and Israeli hegemony in analyzing the political and religious scene in the contemporary Muslim world". He adds that this approach leads Esposito to say that "*Jihād* expressing a 'Rage for God' have increased and have spread. From Algeria and Egypt to Afghanistan and central Asia, governments, often authoritarian, found themselves under siege in the 1990s". Abu Rabi wonders at this statement of Esposito. He argues that "if this were the case, Islāmism would likely gain high marks in political performance. In the case of Algeria, Islāmic movement was officially elected to run the government, but the election results were annulled by the Army...." According to him, "Esposito makes a big deal out of the menace of the Islāmic movement and emotionally inflames his reader by raising the banner of *Jihād* to remind us that states, regimes and their military supporters are all under threat by Islāmists".<sup>57</sup>



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# Conclusion

## CONCLUSION

The Islāmization of knowledge movement led by al-Farūqi *identified* religious-secular duality in knowledge produced by the prevailing educational system of the Muslim world as the main cause of the “malaise” besetting the *ummah* today. In specific terms, considering the value neutral character of the abstract sciences, al-Farūqi and his colleagues assumed that this duality of knowledge was the outcome of the disciplines of social sciences and humanities which were in essence a product of the western culture. They, therefore, focused mainly on these disciplines to bridge the gulf between secular and religious knowledge. This, they hoped to achieve through ‘Islāmization of knowledge’, “the concrete manifestation” of which according to al-Farūqi was the Islāmization of disciplines with main emphasis on the humanities and social sciences. As an antidote to this dichotomy of knowledge, the Islāmization involved the recasting of the value laden knowledge of the humanities and social sciences in accordance with the teachings of Islām on the one hand, and at the same time the renewal and updating of the traditional Islāmic legacy to ensure its relevance to the much complicated needs and requirements in the world today. Al-Farūqi and his colleagues observed the methodological shortcomings and inadequacies of the traditional legacy and emphasized the need to forge a new methodology so as to enable the *Ummah* to reorient its thought and vision towards the accomplishment of its divinely ordained goals as the chosen community (*Khayr-e -Ummah*) of the world. The new methodology was to be blazed in a manner as to overcome the inadequacies of the traditional methodology on the one hand and to ensure deterrence against the encroachments of the dominant western ideas on the other. In a word, it was to be based on rational principles and approaches incorporating Islāmic objectives. On the whole, the Islāmization of knowledge movement dominated the discourse on Islām in the decades of 1980 and 1990. Its success during these decades can be gauged from

the fact that several institutions and organizations were established exclusively for achieving the goals of Islāmization of knowledge. Prominent among such organizations and institutions were the Association of Muslim Social Scientists and the International Institute of Islāmic Thought in Herndon, Virginia, USA. Since their inception, both of them have been actively involved in organizing conferences, workshops, seminars and publishing books and research papers pertaining to Islāmization of knowledge. Many other organizations already existing also extended their support to the Islāmization of knowledge movement. In our country, India, the Institute of Objective Studies (New Delhi) and the Muslim Association for the Advancement of Science and Centre for Studies on Science (Aligarh) have made some valuable contributions with regard to the Islāmization of knowledge. However, after its remarkable success during 1980s and 1990s, the Islāmization of knowledge movement is no longer a highly impressive and appealing movement in the Muslim world today.

Al-Farūqi had expressed a strong hope that Islāmization of knowledge will serve as a prelude to the Islāmization or revival of *Ummah*. But more than two decades after his demise, al-Faruqi's hope remains immaterialized today even though a substantial work has been done with regard to Islāmization of knowledge. This failure of Islāmization of knowledge movement in leading the *Ummah* towards its overall revival or Islāmization may be attributed to its seemingly theoretical and yet cumbersome character. Its appeal has remained limited to a narrow section of the *Ummah* namely the elite or intellectual class throughout its history.

Sayyid Qutb's vision of Islāmization on the contrary, is more practical and it has remained appealing to a wider audience in the Muslim world till today. This is adduced by the fact that a number of Islāmic movements ranging from *Al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun* of Egypt to *Jamat-e-Islāmi* of India and Pakistan and from Algerian Islāmic Salvation Front to the now globally active *al-Qaeda*, all are supposedly

influenced by the Islāmization ideas of Sayyid Qutb. Qutb's discourse of Islāmization is based on an extraordinary emphasis on belief (*a'qeedah*) and dynamism or action (*harakah*). In his view there is only a single method through which the *Ummah* can bring about its revival. This is the method that was adopted by the generation of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and that of his four rightly guided Caliphs' generation. He seems to assert the fact that the generation the Prophet (SAW) and that of his rightly guided Caliphs' was able to establish an Islāmic society amidst the surrounding *Jāhiliyyah* only because it believed strongly and it acted its belief meticulously and vigorously. Qutb believes that the *Jāhiliyyah* still pervades the world. In fact he finds the *Jāhiliyyah* of today as more sinister and complex than that prevailing in Arabia before the advent of Islām. The reason for this is that pre-Islāmic *Jāhiliyyah* was the product of mere ignorance but today's *Jāhiliyyah* is rooted in knowledge. As, today's *Jāhiliyyah* is rooted in knowledge in view of Qutb, he devotes a great deal to address the problem of knowledge. He makes it clear that human beings have not been endowed with the capacity to comprehend all the complexities and realities which they encounter in their life. According to him, Allāh has made them His vicegerents on earth and therefore, granted them the capacity to know all that they require for achieving their goals as vicegerents of God. But they have not been endowed with the capacity to devise their own life-conceptions or *weltanschauung* and schemes of life. He asserts that as the Creator of the whole Universe, it is the exclusively right of God to ordain a scheme of life for His creation. For, it is He alone who knows what best augurs to His creation. It is precisely for this reason that Qutb expresses relentless fear regarding the pursuit of knowledge of humanities and social sciences. Qutb asserts that these disciplines have transgressed into the realm which solely belongs to God, the Almighty Creator of the Universe. They deal with such questions which only God, the All-knowing can address and answer. He alone knows what is the best model of life within which man can act in

the best possible way? It is therefore, the *Shariah*, the divinely ordained path within which mankind must strive to accomplish its goals – its divinely assigned goals as the vicegerent God. Qutb, however, concedes that the pure or abstract sciences being value neutral and essentially Islāmic in origin will facilitate mankind in achieving these goals. Humanities and social sciences are according to him part of *Jāhiliyyah* that must be abandoned or at the best pursued with a meticulous caution and that too to have an idea of the extent to which the *Jāhiliyyah* has reached. Qutb wants to supplant these *Jāhili* disciplines by Islām, which according to him is comprehensive enough to cater to, and solve all the problems facing mankind today. Qutb did not believe in Islāmizing the disciplines of humanities and social sciences in a manner in which al-Farūqi and his colleagues did. On the contrary, to him, Islāmization of knowledge would mean returning to divinely ordained sources in matters dealing with the regulation of human life. Such clarification of knowledge is important for Qutb for effecting a change in the *Jāhili* society. But Islāmization of knowledge alone is not enough for bringing about this change. He asserts that unless a vanguard of true believers comes into existence and dedicates itself to the cause of establishing Islāmic society, no change of the existing *Jāhili* society is possible. It is the *harakah* (action or dynamism) of this vanguard which will necessitate this change as the *harakah* of the generation of the Prophet and that of his successors' did. According to him, today too the *Jāhiliyyah* dominating the world is well established and organized, having its own comprehensive philosophy of life and loyal followers. Therefore, to usher in a change of such established *Jāhiliyyah*, Qutb suggests that the vanguard must proceed or march ahead after acquiring the necessary wherewithal. This wherewithal must at least be commensurate with the wherewithal possessed by the *Jāhiliyyah*. It must consist of a comprehensive philosophy of life and a strong commitment of this vanguard to eliminate *Jāhiliyyah*. In other words, the vanguard must mobilize a support which at least matches or better overrides the support



mobilized by *Jāhiliyyah*, both at the ideological level as well as at the practical level. At the ideological level, the vanguard must take to preaching, expose the non viability of *Jāhili* concepts and highlight the viability of the Islāmic concepts. At the practical level, it must wage Jihad, targeting the *Jāhili* institutions and organizations that prevent the people from enjoying freedom and thereby make decisions with their own conscience regarding the vital questions of life i.e. regarding their faith (*a'qeedah*). Qutb asserts that at both the levels, the *Jāhiliyyah* will attempt to prevent the vanguard from marching ahead. At the ideological level, it will try to divert its attention by asking such questions as 'what is the nature of the system you are seeking to establish? How many articles and research papers have you written and so on?' At the practical level the *Jāhiliyyah*, no doubt with its advanced technology and skilful man power would provide tougher challenges to the vanguard. It is only a strong belief accompanied by a strong commitment to act (*harakah*) on the part of this vanguard that will enable it to march ahead, overthrow the *Jāhiliyyah* and ultimately establish an Islāmic society after overcoming these adversaries. Once the *Jāhiliyyah* is abolished, Qutb claims that the masses will become free to use their own conscience in making decisions regarding their vital questions of life – the question of faith (*a'qeedah*).

When such stage is reached, Qutb asserts that the greater sublimity and the greater viability of Islām would naturally attract people towards its fold. He believed that human logic can never surrender itself to a contradiction and there is no contradiction in the Islāmic concept. Thus once their conscience is freed, they will naturally accept the system that has no contradictions. In this way Islāmization of society will be brought about.

Qutb's ideas and views regarding Islāmization of society have been influencing the Muslims throughout the world. However, at times his views have been misinterpreted and mistaken by several extremist groups operating in the world.

The most infamous globally active extremist movement of the present, the *al-Qaeda* is also supposed to have been influenced by Qutb's ideas. The western media in general has condemned and ridiculed his views in the aftermath of the 11 September 2001 attacks on World Trade Centre and pentagon in USA. Today, Qutb is being remembered particularly in the West with such titles as "godfather of extremism" "philosopher of terror" etc. In truth, however, Qutb does not advocate terrorism in his writings. He only projects himself as an ardent advocate of revolutionary change and asserts that this change will be brought about by a committed vanguard, waging Jihad against *Jāhilī* institutions and organizations that provide a hurdle for common masses to use their own conscience in making decisions regarding their faith. Qutb does not advocate killing of people as such, although he does concede violence through Jihad. His emphasis that Jihad against *Jāhiliyyah* should be led by a vanguard thoroughly engrossed in Islām and committed to establish Islāmic society is intended to prevent this Jihad from turning into a mere violent terrorism. Unlike the modern terrorism which does not deter from threatening the lives of innocents by carrying out acts of violence at public places, Qutb wants the vanguard to limit their use of force against *Jāhilī* institutions and organizations but not against the people living in such societies. His call for Jihad and the establishment of Islāmic society is mainly aimed at bringing about the reform of people groping in a state of *Jāhiliyyah*.

# Appendix

## APPENDIX

### SOME CONTRIBUTORS TO ISLĀMIZATION OF KNOWLEDGE MOVEMENT.

#### 1. ABU SULAYMAN, ABDUL HAMID:

He was born in Mecca in 1936. He did his graduation in Commerce (1959) and post-graduation (M.A.) in Political Science (1963) from the University of Cairo and then received his Ph.D. (International Relations) from the University of Pennsylvania in 1973. He was one of the founding members and president of both Association of Muslim Social Scientists (AMSS) and International Institute of Islāmic Thought (IIIT). He also served as the secretary of World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY) from 1973-1979; Chairman of the Department of Political Science at King Saud University (1982-1984), Riyadh, Saudi Arabia; and Rector of International Islāmic University in Malaysia. He has authored several articles and books dealing with “Islāmization of knowledge”. The noteworthy are the following (a) ‘Islāmization of knowledge: Reforming of Contemporary knowledge’; First published in the *AJISS* under the title “Islāmization of Knowledge with Special Reference to Political Science”. (*AJISS*, Vol. 2, No: 2, 1985).

(b) ‘Crisis in the Muslim Minds’ and (c) ‘The Islāmic Theory of International Relations: New Directions for Islāmic Methodology and Thought.’

#### 2. AHMAD, KHURSHID

His in-depth comparative study of the oriental as well as occidental philosophies in religion, academics, economics, constitutional matters and commitment for Islām has led him to be entrusted with key positions in the national as well as international organizations on these socio-economic and other multi-dimensional disciplines.

Khurshid Ahmad has held the portfolio of the Federal Minister of Planning and Development and has been Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, Government of Pakistan (1978-79). He has served as Chairman, International Institute of Islāmic Economics, International Islāmic University, Islāmabad (1983-87); President, International Association of Islāmic Economics, Leicester, UK (1984-92); Member, Supreme Advisory Council, International Centre for Research and Islāmic Economics, King Abdul Aziz University, Jeddah (1979-83); Vice President, Standing Conference on Jews, Christians and Muslims in Europe, Berlin and London (1974-78); Member, Advisory Council, Centre for the Study of Islām and Christian-Muslim Relations, Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham, UK (1976-78); Member, National Hijra Committee, Govt of Pakistan (1978-83); Member, Committee of Jurists to Evaluate Islāmic Laws in Sudan (1986-87); Member, International Review Committee, Islāmic Research and Training Institute, Islāmic Development Bank, Jeddah (1988-89).

Khurshid Ahmad is Founder and Chairman of both Institute of Policy Studies, Islāmabad and The Islāmic Foundation, Leicester (UK). He is member of Boards of Trustees of Islāmic Centre, Zaria (Nigeria); International Islāmic University, Islāmabad; Foundation Council, Royal Academy for Islāmic Civilization, Amman (Jordan); and Vice President of Islāmic Research Academy, Karachi and Lahore.

Ahmad has been editing a number of ideologically oriented magazines and periodicals. He authored and edited about 35 books each in English and Urdu (total 70) and contributed to a large number of magazines. He has so far participated in over 100 international conferences and seminars in his personal as well as representative capacities.

In view of his pioneering work and contributions towards the development of Islāmic Economics as an academic discipline, he was awarded the First Islāmic Development Bank Award for Economics in 1988. His contributions to the Islāmic cause were

recognized in the form of King Faisal International Prize, 1990. In recognition of his services in Islāmic Economics & Finance, he was given 5th Annual Prize of American Finance House, La'Riba, USA in July 1998.

Khurshid Ahmad became a member of Islāmi Jamiat-e-Talaba (IJT) in 1949 and was elected as Nazim-e-A'ala (President) of that organisation in 1953. He formally joined Jama'at-e-Islāmi Pakistan in 1956. Besides several other responsibilities he is presently editor of the *Tarjuman al Qur'ān*, a monthly publication of Jamāt-e-Islāmi.

### 3. AHAMD, S AKBAR:

He was the first Director General of the National Centre for Rural Development, Islāmabad, and Director of the Centre of Social Sciences University Grants Commission, Pakistan. He has also been Commissioner of Makran Division as well.

He has been a visiting scholar in the Institute for Advanced Study, School of Social Sciences, Princeton University, in the Harvard, Institute of International Development, Harvard University, Cambridge and also held and honorary professorship at the University of Washington.

Having completed his undergraduate study at the Punjab University (1961), Ahmad obtained his Ph.D. from the School of oriental and African Studies at London University in anthropology (1978).

He is the author of numerous books and articles, many which such as “Toward Islāmic Anthropology”, “Towards Islāmic Anthropology: Definition, Dogma, and Direction” and “Development of Anthropology Manual” have attracted international attention.

### 4. AL-ALWANI, TAHA JABIR:

He was born in 1935 in Iraq. He completed his graduation in 1959, Post-graduation (M.A.) in 1968 and Ph.D. in *Usul-al-Fiqh* in 1973 from al-Azhar University in Cairo; Egypt. He was a Professor of *Fiqh and Usul-al-Fiqh* from

1975 to 1985 at King Saud University in Riyadh. He was one of the founding members of IIIT and has been member of its Board of Trustee. He is also the founder of the Council of the Muslim World League in Mecca, a member of *Fiqh* Academy in Jeddah since 1987 and has been the president of *Fiqh* Council of North America since 1988.

He authored several articles and books. The important works of Taha Jabir, dealing with “Islāmization of knowledge” include:

- (1) ‘Islāmization of knowledge: Yesterday and Today’.
- (2) ‘Towards an Islāmic alternative in thought and knowledge’.

#### **5. AL-ATTAS, SYED MUHAMMAD AL NAQUIB:**

Syed Muhammad al Naquib bin Ali bin Abdullah bin Muhsin al Attas (born September 5, 1931) is a prominent contemporary Muslim philosopher and thinker from Malaysia. He is one of the few contemporary scholars who is thoroughly rooted in the traditional Islāmic sciences and who is equally competent in theology, philosophy, metaphysics, history, and literature. He is considered to be the pioneer in proposing the idea of Islāmization of knowledge. Al-Attas' philosophy and methodology of education have one goal: Islāmization of the mind, body and soul and its effects on the personal and collective life on Muslims as well as others, including the spiritual and physical non-human environment. He is the author of twenty-seven works on various aspects of Islāmic thought and civilization. Some important ones among them are: (1978) *Islām and Secularism* ISBN 983-99628-6-8, (1980) *The Concept of Education in Islām*, (1989) *Islām and the Philosophy of Science*, (1990) *The Nature of Man and the Psychology of the Human Soul*, and (1992) *The Concept of Religion and the Foundation of Ethics and Morality*

#### **6. BARZINJI, JAMAL**

Member of board of directors for the Center for the Study of Islām & Democracy, Vice-president of the International Institute for Islāmic Thought,

Associated with seven organizations connected to terrorist financing, Jamal Barzinji sits on the Board of Directors of the Center for the Study of Islām & Democracy (CSID). He is also Vice President of the International Institute for Islāmic Thought in Herndon, Virginia. Barzinji was also a Board member of the Graduate School of Islāmic and Social Sciences and has functioned as a representative of the World Assembly of Muslim Youth. He has also served as a trustee and officer of the Amana Mutual Funds Trust, a growth and income mutual fund headquartered in Bellingham, Washington.

## **7. CHAPRA, MUHAMMAD UMER**

M. Umer Chapra (born 1933), a Saudi citizen, is currently serving as Research Advisor at the Islāmic Research & Training Institute (IRTI) of the Islāmic Development Bank (IDB). Before joining IRTI in 1999, he worked as Senior Economic Advisor at the Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency (SAMA) from here; he retired after a long service of 35 years.

Chapra taught in the United States at the Universities of Wisconsin and Kentucky and worked in Pakistan at the Institute of Development Economics and the Islāmic Research Institute. He has made seminal contributions to Islāmic Economics and Finance over more than three decades in the form of ten books and monographs and more than seventy papers and book reviews. Consequently, he has received a number of awards, including the Islāmic Development Bank Award for Islāmic Economics, and the King Faisal International Award for Islāmic Studies, both in 1989.

His most outstanding contributions however, have been his three books: *Towards a Just Monetary system* (1985), *Islām and the economic Challenge* (1992) and *the Future of Economics: An Islāmic perspective* (2000). All of these three books have been widely acclaimed.



## 8. FARIDI, F.R

F. R. FARIDI has been associated with Islāmic economics since its early exposition in the Indian subcontinent in early 50's. He has written extensively on Islāmic economics in general and fiscal economics of Islām, in particular. Born in Aril 1930 in a small town Jaunpur (UP) he took his MA in economics with distinction from Allahabad University in 1951. Presently he is the Chief Editor *Journal of Objective Studies*, New Delhi and concurrently the editor of the Urdu monthly *Zindgi*, the organ of *Jamaat-e Islāmi Hind*. He has been associated with various academic and social organizations of Indian Muslim Community Since his student days.

## 9. ISLAHI, ABDUL AZIM

Abdul Azim Islahi had his early education in Arabic and *Shari'ah* sciences at *Madrasah al-Islah*, Azamgarh (India) and, later on, received his doctorate in Economics from the Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh (India). Having served earlier as Asst. Professor at the King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah (Saudi Arabia), Islahi has been working since 1989 as Reader in Economics at the Aligarh Muslim University. He has contributed articles to several edited volumes, namely *Aspects of Islāmic Economics* (New Delhi, 1993); *History of Economic Thought* (Hampshire, UK, 1992); *Readings in Macro-economics* (Kuala Lumpur, 1992), proceedings of the *Islāmic Fiqh Seminar*, and leading academic journals in English, Urdu and Arabic.

## 10. KHAN, MUHAMMAD AKRAM

Muhammad Akram Khan (b. 1945), graduated from Punjab University (M.Com) in 1967 and the University of Aston in Birmingham (M.Sc.) in Industrial Administration in 1970. He joined the Department of the Auditor-General of Pakistan in 1970. Since then he has held various positions in the Government of Pakistan. e is at present Director General (Training) in the Department of the Auditor-General. A

noted scholar of Islāmic economics, he has published numerous books, papers and monographs. These include Annotated Bibliography of Islāmic Economics (2 vols.); A Glossary of Islāmic Economics; Economic Teachings of Prophet Muhammad: Challenge of Islāmic Economics; Islāmic Banking in Pakistan; Organizing Zakah.

#### **11. KIRMANI, M. ZAKI**

He was born in 1950 and did his MSC from AMU and Ph.D. (Chemistry) from Indian Institute of Technology, New Delhi.

Zaki Kirmani is the Chairman for Studies on Science. He has been the Hon'y Secretary of MAAS during 1984-93 and again during 2002-05. He was the Vice-President of MAAS for the term 1993-99. Zaki Kirmani is also on the Editorial Board of the Journal of Islāmic Science and president, Editorial Board of *AYAT*. He has contributed several articles in *Journal of Islāmic Science* and *AYAT* besides authoring two books. Kirmani has edited the "Encyclopedia of Islāmic Science and Scientists" in 4 volumes.

#### **12. MAWDUDI, SAYYID ABUL A'LA (1903-1979)**

One of the chief architects and leaders of the cotemporary Islāmic resurgence is the most outstanding Islāmic thinker and writer of our time. He devoted his entire life to expounding the meaning and message of Islām, inviting individuals to renew their commitment to their Creator, and to organizing a movement to establish Islām fully. In this struggle, he had to pass through all kinds of suffering: between 1948 and 1967, he was put behind bars on four occasions, spending a total of five years in different prisons of Pakistan; in 1953, he was also sentenced to death by a Martial Law court for writing a 'seditious' pamphlet, this sentence later being commuted to life imprisonment. In 1941, he founded *Jama'at Islāmi*, of which he remained *amir* (Chief) until 1972 and which is one of the most prominent Islāmic movements

of our day. He authored more than a hundred works on Islām, both scholarly and popular, and his writings have been translated into forty languages.

### **13. MOMIN, ABDUR-RAHMAN**

He was trained in Sociology and Cultural Anthropology at St Xavier's College, Bombay and at the Department of Sociology, University of Bombay. He has been teaching Sociology and anthropology at the University of Bombay for nearly three decades. He has been head of the Department of sociology (1991-1999) and is at present Professor of Cultural anthropology. His numerous papers, written since 1972, have been published in Indian and international journals. He has written few works on Islāmic Sociology including *Towards an Islāmic Sociology*. His forthcoming publications include Introduction to sociology-an Islāmic Perspective, South Asia and Sociology and Anthropology in Islāmic Perspective-Readings and Bibliography (in two volumes).

### **14. QARADAWI, YUSUF AL**

Qaradawi (b. 1926) is an Egyptian; he graduated from Al Azhar University in Cairo and was arrested several times by government authorities between 1949 and 1961 because of his activity in the Muslim Brotherhood. In 1961 he moved to Qatar, where he has resided since. Qaradawi exercises his influence through a wide network of associations and his adept use of various media. He is the founder and dean of the Sharia (Islāmic Law) College at Qatar University and chairman of the European Council for Fatwa and Research, an organization that seeks to become the official religious authority for European Muslims. His teachings are exported to Europe and North America through several organizations sympathetic to the Muslim Brotherhood. The Internet and TV have been crucial to establishing his worldwide appeal. He was relatively quick to take advantage of the Web, launching a site in his name in 1997. He is also chairman of Islām Online, a popular site supported by the government of Qatar, and he is a regular guest on Al Jazeera, the satellite TV

network (also based in Qatar). His Friday sermons at the Umar bin al-Khattab mosque, a government-sponsored mosque in Doha, are regularly broadcast live on Qatar television. Qaradawi's other activities have included serving as an advisor on Islāmic law to several Gulf-based financial institutions. He advised – and was a major shareholder in – the Bahamas-based Al Taqwa Bank, which was designated a terrorist entity by the United States following 9/11.

#### **15. SAFI, LOUAY M.**

Born in Damascus, **Louay M. Safi** has a B.Sc. in Civil Engineering and an M.A. and Ph.D. in from Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan. Safi is the Director of Research at the International Institute of Islāmic Thought (IIIT), Vice President of the Association of Muslim Social Scientist (AMSS), President of the Center for Balanced Development (CBD), Editor of the Journal of Islāmic Social Sciences (AJISS), and a Founding Member and Director of the Center for the Study of Islām and Democracy (CSID).

He served as the Executive Director of the International Institute of Islāmic Thought in Malaysia from 1995 to 1997, and was also an Associate Professor of Political Science (1994-99), the Dean of Research (1998-99), and a Senate Member (1995-99) at the International Islāmic University, Malaysia.

Some of Safi's publications include: *The Challenge of Modernity* (University Press of America, 1994), *Al-Aqidah wa al-Siyasah* (International Institute of Islāmic Thought, 1996), *The Foundation of Knowledge* (International Islāmic University of Malaysia, 1996), *Truth and Reform* (The Open Press, 1998), and *ʿImal al-ʿAql* (Dar al-Fikr, 1998).

He has participated in numerous international forums and conferences, and contributed articles to various academic journals, including the *American Journal of Islāmic Social Sciences*, *Islāmic Studies*, *Intellectual Discourse*, *Middle East Affairs*

*Journal, Islāmiyyat al-Ma'rifa, al-Mustaqbal al-Arabi, Minbar al-Hiwar, al-Insan, and al-Muslim al-Mu'asir.*

#### **16. SIDDIQUI, MUHAMMAD NEJATULLAH**

Winner of the King Faisal International Prize for Islāmic Studies, Muhammad Nejatullah Siddiqi was born in India in 1931. Educated at Aligarh Muslim University and *Thanvi Darsgah Jamaat-e-Islāmi Hindi*, Rampur, he also studied at, he also studied at *Madrasatul Islah*, Saraimir, Azamgarh.

Siddiqi served as Associate professor of Economics and Professor of Islāmic Studies at the Aligarh University and as professor of Economics at the king Abul Aziz University Jedah, in its Center for Research in Islāmic Economics. Later, he was a Fellow at the Center for Near Eastern Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles and after that a Visiting Scholar at the Islāmic Research & Training Institute, Islāmic Development Bank, Jeddah. During his long academic career, he has supervised a number of Ph. D. theses in the Universities in India, Saudi Arabia and Nigeria.

Among the several works of Siddiqi are : Recent Theories of profit : A Critical Examination (1971); Banking Without Interest (1983); Insurance in an Islāmic Economy (1985); Teaching Economics in Islāmic Perspective (1966); Role of State in Islāmic Economy (1966) and Dialogue in Islāmic Economics, he was awarded the Shah Waliullah Award in New Delhi in 2003.

Siddiqi has been and continues to be associated with a number of academic journals as editor or advisor. He has served on numerous committees and participated in many conferences in various parts of the world. Presently, he lives in California with his children.

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